

Moving to Barcelona

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
SETTLING DOWN



Moving to **Barcelona**

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SETTLING DOWN**



**Ajuntament
de Barcelona**

BARCELONA, AN OPEN AND WELCOMING CITY

Barcelona, with more than 2000 years of history, has always been a mixed, welcoming, tolerant and open city. Open to the sea, open to trade and commerce, as well as other people and cultures.

Barcelona is a city with a soul and a special charm, full of stimulating contrasts, committed to the current world challenges and with initiative and drive.

With a long industrial and commercial tradition, the Barcelona area is one of the most powerful economic engines in Europe, with a strong presence of foreign companies that invest here thanks to a diversified economy with many competitive assets. The city is also one of the most dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystems, especially in new technologies and life sciences. It is ranked among the top 5 start-up cities in Europe and is a hub for innovation, research and culture. An outstanding academic system generates and attracts talent and many delegates visit our city to attend congresses, conventions and fairs.

All of the business, cultural and leisure opportunities combined with the local lifestyle make Barcelona a great place to live. And that explains why Barcelona is a cosmopolitan city with a large and active international community.

If you are reading this, you may be considering moving to Barcelona. Here you will find the friendliness and warmth of the Mediterranean character that encourages visitors to come and get to know us, a

pleasant climate all year round, as well as an enviable quality of life with unique and distinguished neighbourhoods, and cohesive communities that will make you feel at home.

Whether you are still thinking about moving to our city, are in the process of doing so or have just arrived, this guide will help you settle in and make the most of your first experiences here. It includes everything you need to know before coming to Barcelona and upon your arrival, to make moving in and your everyday life easy.

The objective is for you to become a new *Barcelonian*, proud of your adopted city and ready to enjoy all that this beautiful and vibrant place has to offer.

Welcome home, welcome to Barcelona.



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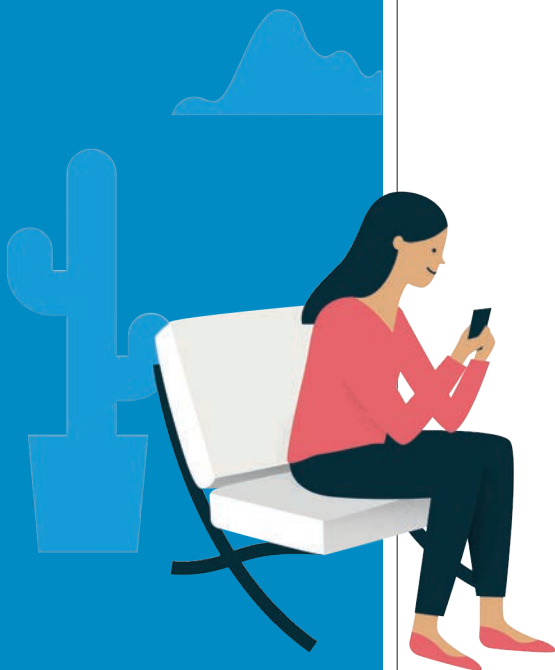
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Practical information



▶ PLEASANT CLIMATE

Barcelona has a Mediterranean climate that begs you to enjoy the city by day and by night. Cradled between the sea and the mountains, it enjoys a microclimate with an average temperature of 10°C in winter and 25°C in summer, few days of rainfall and more than 2,800 hours of sunshine per year.

▶ LOCAL TIME

Local time in the Spanish peninsula is one hour ahead of GMT, six hours ahead of US Eastern Standard Time and nine hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time. When it is 6.00 p.m. in Barcelona, it is 5.00 p.m. in London and noon in New York.

Spain, like the rest of Europe, observes Summer Time. Clocks go forward one hour on the last Sunday in March and go back one hour on the last Sunday in October. This time change takes place simultaneously in all EU member states.

▶ MEALTIMES

Spaniards tend to eat later than other Europeans. They usually have a light breakfast of fruit juice, coffee and a pastry or sandwich between 9.00-11.00 a.m. Lunch is between 2.00-3.00 pm. Dinner starts between 9.00-10.00 p.m.

▶ SHOPPING HOURS

Most establishments are open from Monday to Saturday and are closed on Sundays. They open between 9.00-10.00 a.m. and close between 1.00-2.00 p.m. They then reopen between 4.30-5.00 p.m. and close between 8.00-9.00 p.m. Markets open earlier, between 7.00-8.00 a.m. Smaller shops close by 2.00-3.00 p.m. Some shops do not open on Saturday afternoons. Major shopping centres and a growing number of shops open all day, from 10.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. from Monday to Saturday.

A few shops and shopping centres are open on Sundays and holidays, mostly around Christmas and at the summer or winter sales periods. In summer, many restaurants and shops close for all or part of August.

▶ HOLIDAYS

Spain has public holidays, many of them with religious origin. Some are celebrated nationwide while others are celebrated only in Catalonia or in Barcelona.

Bank holidays in Barcelona

1 January — *Any Nou** / New Year's Day

6 January — *Dia de Reis** / Epiphany

March-April (movable) — *Divendres Sant** / Good Friday

March-April (movable) — *Dilluns de Pasqua*** / Easter Monday

1 May — *Dia del Treball** / Labour Day

May (movable) — *Pasqua Granada**** / Pentecost Monday

24 June — *Sant Joan*** / Feast Day of St. John

15 August — *L'Assumpció** / The Assumption

11 September — *Diada Nacional de Catalunya*** / Catalan National Day

24 September — *Festa de la Mercè**** / La Mercè Festival

12 October — *Dia de la Hispanitat** / Spanish National Day

1 November — *Tots Sants** / All Saints' Day

6 December — *Dia de la Constitució** / Constitution Day

8 December — *La Immaculada** / Immaculate Conception

25 December — *Nadal** / Christmas Day

26 December — *Sant Esteve*** / Feast Day of St. Stephen (Boxing Day)

* National holiday

** Regional holiday (Catalonia only)

*** Local holiday (Barcelona only)

▶ STREET ADDRESSES

The standard address format begins with the street name and number, followed by the floor number and the flat or unit number. For example, the address *Carrer d'Aragó 137, 2n 3r* corresponds to a flat on Aragó street, at number 137 which is on the second floor and is door number 3.

In Spain, the ground floor is either marked 0 or PB (*planta baixa* in Catalan). Ground-floor flats are usually called *baixos* in Catalan, often abbreviated *bxs*. Some buildings also have a mezzanine (*entresòl, entl*), which is one floor up from the ground floor. One floor above this is the *principal (pral)*. Successive floors are then marked 1, 2, etc. Negative numbers are used for floors below ground. The topmost floor is commonly called an *àtic*.

▶ POSTAL SERVICE

Correos (*Sociedad Estatal de Correos y Telégrafos*) is the national postal service of Spain. Through *Correos*, you can send letters, documents, telegrams, faxes and parcels. You can even send money by postal order. *Correos* also offers national and international express delivery services and an online tracking system.

The main post office in Barcelona is on Plaça d'Antoni López, at the end of Via Laietana near Barceloneta and Port Vell. Here you can buy stamps, send letters and parcels, and rent a post office box. It is open from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday and from 8.30 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. on Saturdays. It is closed on Sundays.

There are numerous post offices throughout Barcelona, all with a distinctive yellow sign. Be aware that not all post offices have the same opening times, so be sure to check the *Correos* website for this information. You can also buy stamps at tobacconists and drop your stamped mail in one of the yellow post boxes found all around the city.



Visit correos.es for more information

▶ TIPPING

Restaurants are required by law to include service charges in their menu prices. There is no expected rate for tips. Most people leave small change if they are satisfied with service.

It is also customary to tip hotel porters and washroom attendants. Five percent is the usual tip for taxi drivers, more for longer journeys and if the driver helped with your luggage.

▶ DRESS CODE

Being a cosmopolitan city where design and fashion are key influences, locals tend to dress up a bit more than some other European capitals. Appearance is important in Catalan society, and modesty is favoured, although tolerance is another trait of the city.

People also dress up to go out at night.

▶ SAFETY

Barcelona is a safe city, with a very low rate of serious crimes. As in any other big city, pickpockets tend to concentrate in certain areas where it is easy to find a distracted tourist, such as at a popular sight, a crowded metro station or a busy restaurant. Being alert and taking common-sense precautions will prevent most of that pickpocketing activity.

The city is patrolled by the *Guàrdia Urbana* (Barcelona's city police) and the *Mossos d'Esquadra* (the Catalan regional police). If you need to contact any of these police bodies, you can call the emergency number or go to your closest police station



Single emergency number

Health emergencies, firefighting and rescue, police and civil protection:

Tel: 112

Available 24 hours a day every day of the year. Free call.

▷ CITIZEN INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Barcelona City Council has different communications channels available to city residents, through which they can ask for information on the city, report incidents or complaints, carry out municipal procedures, etc.

Online:

Visit **barcelona.cat** for general information about the city of Barcelona or **ajuntament.barcelona.cat/atenciocitadana** to find out more specific information, complete procedures, access the telematic registry, etc.

By phone:

Telephone: 010 (Free call)
If you are outside Barcelona and the Metropolitan area, you should call on telephone number: **931 537 010** (regular tariff)

For complaints and suggestions regarding the city cleaning services, maintenance and control of the urban areas, call the civic response telephone: **900226226** (free call)

In person:

You can go to one of the Citizen Help and Information Offices (*oficines d'atenció ciutadana*, OAC), located throughout the city. One of these offices offers assistance in different foreign languages: the one located in Plaça San Miquel, 3.

For specific municipal procedures, it is necessary to make an appointment. You can book it in advance at: **ajuntament.barcelona.cat/cita** or by calling at **010** (free) if you are in the city.

Apart from these channels, you can also check the municipal social networks, newsletters or use other resources, such as the stalls (quioscos).

Catalonia Citizen Information (Government of Catalonia)

Visit the website: **web.gencat.cat/en**
By phone, call **012** (within Catalonia) or **902 400 012** (outside Catalonia but within Spain).



Avinguda Diagonal near Glòries

2

Procedures

10

Moving to another country involves having to carry out numerous administrative procedures, among many other things. Some of these are mandatory or very necessary and can also be fairly complicated.

Hardly anyone likes bureaucracy but there is no getting around it. You can get it all done with a little spirit, planning and patience, even if a lot of forms are drafted only in the local language and civil servants who speak your language are hard to come by.



As some procedures required for living in Barcelona can be very different from what you would expect in other countries, this chapter will offer you a general explanation on the more important procedures and some advice to bear in mind.

The procedures to be carried out will vary according to a person's characteristics. For example, immigration procedures for European Union citizens are different from those for non-European Union citizens. There are also different procedures depending on whether a person has arrived alone or accompanied by family members, whether they are bringing a pet with them or a car.



The information in this chapter is for general guidance. The purpose is to provide advice on and an overview of the most important procedures that have to be carried out. The legal information presented is not guaranteed or binding since the country's legislation may change. Seek professional, specialist help if you have any queries.



▶ BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR ARRIVAL

Planning is important when you are moving to a new destination. Remember to make your arrangements, including any procedures, before you go.

You will find an overview below with an itinerary for guidance on the various procedures you will have to carry out, ordered chronologically:

As you can see in the itinerary, there are several procedures you will have to carry out from your country of origin before you move here. We recommend you consult the specific function at the corresponding Diplomatic Mission or Consular Office before you start your applications.

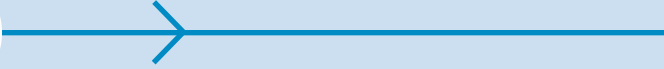


Look for the Spanish Consulate in your area at: exterores.gob.es/Portal/es/ServiciosAlCiudadano/Paginas/EmbajadasConsulados.aspx

ITINERARY (JOURNEY) OF PROCEDURES TO BE CARRIED OUT



**I am in
my country
of origin**



Social Security number

You will need to request a Social Security number, without which you cannot work and/or pay your contributions to Spain's Social Security system. You will also need to show you are paying your contributions before you can access the public health-care system



Identifying documents

You are under a legal obligation to have a national identity document at hand. The type of document will vary depending on your nationality and the period of your stay in the country



Health-Care Card

You can have the card that gives you access to the Catalan public health-care system (CatSalut) and to the co-payment for pharmaceutical cover



Pets

If you want to bring your pet, you will have to carry out several procedures such as registering it with the animal register



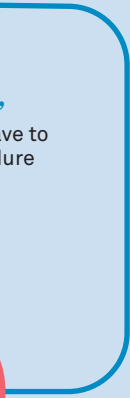


Immigration: visa/residence permit

If you are from outside the EU, you will have to apply for a permit to reside in the country. The type of permit will depend on your profile and the reason for your moving



If you have a pet,
it is possible you will have to carry out some procedure



Municipal registration

It is essential for you to register with the “padró”, which is the register of residents normally living in a town or city



I have arrived in Barcelona



Vehicle and driver's licence

If you want to bring your vehicle or drive, depending on your nationality, you will have to exchange your driver's licence and/or register your vehicle



▶ LEGALISING AND TRANSLATING PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

Some procedures for coming to Barcelona require public documents that have been issued in your country (such as a birth or marriage certificate) and these will need to be accepted by the local authorities.

Even so, it is often hard to be certain about the status and validity of official documents from other countries. To avoid such difficulties, a legalisation process will confirm that a document was issued by someone with the requisite authority, that the document is correct and that the signatures it bears are genuine.

To facilitate the process for legalising public documents, many countries have established international agreements that speed up the legalisation chain.

There are basically two legalisation channels, depending on whether or not the issuer country of the document in question is a signatory to the Hague Convention (of 5 October 1961):

- If the public document's issuer country is a signatory, the document will be recognised if it bears the Hague's Apostille stamp. This is a sort of certificate processed in the country of origin.
- If the public document's issuer country is not a signatory, the legalisation process will then take the diplomatic channel.

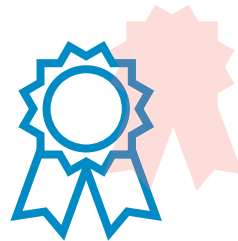
In addition, every foreign public document will require an authorised translation. The translation must bear the seal of a sworn translator. Standard forms from the European Union do not need to be translated or legalised.

▶ GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COMING TO THIS COUNTRY

When it comes to procedures, it is the ones relating to immigration that certainly prove to be the most complicated. The procedure to follow will also depend on where the person comes from and the reason for their move to Spanish territory. In particular, these procedures referring to immigration policy differ considerably depending on whether or not you are an EU citizen.

Before you start with the various types of procedures, you will need to identify the main requirements you have to satisfy for moving here:

- Not being on Spanish territory illegally.
- Having no criminal record in Spain and in the countries you have resided in over the last five years.
- Not having been banned from entering Spain or listed as a persona non grata in the territorial space of countries that Spain has signed a treaty with to such effect.
- Having sufficient financial resources for yourself and the members of your family during your stay of residence in Spain.
- Having an insurance policy against illness taken out with an insurer that is duly authorised to operate in Spain.
- Paying the corresponding fees for processing your documents.





▶ IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR EU CITIZENS

The EU system applies to citizens (and their family members) of the European Union's member States, the European Economic Space (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) and Switzerland.

All EU citizens residing in Spain will enjoy equal treatment with Spanish citizens. This right extends to family members who are not citizens of a member state of the European Union or the European Economic Space. As a result, they will be able to benefit from the right of temporary and permanent residence.

- If you plan to be in Spain for no more than three months, you do not need to carry out any immigration procedure. You only need to have a valid passport or identity document (ID).
- If you intend to stay for more than three months or establish your residence in Spain, you will have to apply for a **Certificate of registration as a EU national** (*Certificat de registre de ciutadà de la Unió*). As for non-EU family members, the document they need to obtain is the **Residence Card for family members of EU nationals** (*Targeta de residència de familiar de ciutadà de la Unió*).

▶ IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR NON-EU CITIZENS

If you do not come from a member state of the European Union, the European Economic Space (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) or Switzerland, you then have to bear in mind two Statutes that apply to non-EU citizens.

There is a general statute and a later one that was enacted to simplify procedures for skilled immigration. The scope of the two Acts is described below, as well as the main types of visa and permits for each one:

- Framework Act 4/2000, also known as the **"Foreign Nationals Act"**.

This is the general system intended for all foreign nationals. It takes account of the situation of the internal labour market for authorising work permits. So a foreign national will be granted a work permit if the post they are to take has no candidates resident in Spain (whether they are Spanish citizens or legal residents irrespective of their nationality). Residence permits depend on the purpose of the foreign national's intended stay in Spain. It is important you obtain one of the following types of permit, as that will be indispensable for proving the right you acquired for residing and working in Spanish territory.

The types of visa and permits provided for under this Act are as follows:

- **Residence and employment**
- **Residence and self-employment**
- **Non-working residence** (residing without carrying out any working or remunerative activity)
- **Stay for studies**

- Act 14/2013, of 27 September, on supporting entrepreneurs and their internationalisation, also known as the “**Entrepreneurs Act**”.

The statute is aimed mainly at skilled immigrants and simplifies the processes under the general system, turning into a fast track for promoting the international mobility of professionals and executives and attracting foreign investment. It is a selective Act that does not depend on the situation of the internal labour market to allow foreign workers to enter, given that it is understood that they offer specialist skills.

The types of visa and permits provided for under this Act are as follows:

- **Investors**, who make a significant investment (in public debt, shares, investment funds, bank deposits or property investment, having several minimum limits).
- **Entrepreneurs**, who wish to carry out an entrepreneurial activity of general interest (whether because it creates jobs, has an important social and economic impact or contributes to scientific or technological innovation).
- **Highly skilled professionals**.
- **Intra-corporate transfers**, within a company or group of companies established in Spain.
- **Scientists and researchers**.



Consult the requirements that non-EU foreign nationals with various profiles have to satisfy to be able to qualify for the Entrepreneurs Act. It is important you know that, if you are able to qualify for one of these visas, your family members may apply together and at the same time or successively for a residence permit to enable them to reside and work in Spain. Such family members include:

- Spouse or partner with a similar effective relationship
- Children under the age of 18
- Dependent children over the age of 18 who have not established their own family
- Dependent parents

Finally, note that the “Entrepreneur Act” makes possible for foreign nationals to apply for a residence permit while being legally in Spain, thereby being an exception to the application procedure from the country of origin or regular residence which normally applies by default.

▷ MUNICIPAL REGISTRATION

The municipal residents' register (*Padró municipal de habitants*) is a list that citizens regularly living in a town or city (municipality) are registered with. This form of registering is referred to in Barcelona as “*empadronar-se*”.

It is a mandatory procedure for everyone living in Spanish territory and is essential for gaining access to certain rights such as public health-care assistance and basic schooling. It also entitles citizens from countries with EU membership or under a reciprocity agreement with Spain to vote in municipal elections. It is a crucial procedure as well because it is an indispensable requirement for carrying out many other mandatory procedures.

If you live in several cities or towns during the year, you must register with a single place, where you spend the most time. If you live with family members, you can apply for registration as an individual or as a family.

You can do that through several channels in Barcelona. You can consult online at

ajuntament.barcelona.cat/tramits, by telephone by calling **010** or in person by arranging an appointment at ajuntament.barcelona.cat/cita at any of the city's thirteen Citizen Help and Information Offices (OAC). The OAC in Plaça de Sant Miquel may be useful as it offers consultations in several foreign languages. On the day of the appointment, you will have to provide the necessary documents and data of the person or persons who wish to register. The process is generally fairly simple and free of charge. When you carry out a procedure you will receive a *Volant de residència* (which is the document providing that you have been registered).

Finally, it is important you know that registration with the residents' register has no expiry date, except for non-EU foreign nationals without permanent residence. The latter must renew their registration with the residents' register every two years.

IDENTIFYING DOCUMENTS

The procedures for identifying foreign citizens with the Spanish authorities usually cause considerable confusion. We accordingly advise you to consult additional information in case you are not completely clear about the procedures you have to carry out.

To manage these procedures, you will normally need to go to a National Police station, having booked an appointment in advance. Some cities, such as Barcelona, have a high demand for such appointments, so you may find it difficult to arrange your appointment for the time you want.

The main supporting documents you need to obtain when you arrive in Barcelona are listed below:

- **NIE (Identity Number for foreign nationals)**

The NIE is an identification code that is assigned to all foreign nationals residing in Spain or who are active for various economic, professional or social interests. For example, even though you do not regularly reside in Spain, it may be necessary for you to acquire a property, open a bank account, etc.

This is a personal, unique and exclusive code made up of nine digits (numbers and letters). It normally appears in all issued or processed documents.

It is important you know that the NIE is the only code that allows administrative identification with Spanish State bodies. You must not confuse it with the **Certificate of registration as a EU national (*Certificat de registre de ciutadà de la Unió*)** or with the **Identity Card for foreign nationals (*Targeta d'identitat d'estrangers, TIE*)**, which are the main physical documents that contain the NIE.

Bear in mind that the NIE is not an ID card either, as they do not contain a photograph of the person in question. That is why foreign nationals are advised to carry a passport and other identity documents when they travel and reside in Spain.

- **Certificate of registration as a EU national**

Individuals who are subject to the European Union community rules must process this document if they wish to reside in Spain for longer than 3 months. This document confirms that the holder is legally resident in Spain and includes their personal details, nationality, personal address and the NIE (Foreign Identity Number) and the date of issue.

Note that the Certificate of registration as a EU national does not identify the holder or display their nationality. The bearer's identity and nationality can only be attested by the identity document issued by the country of origin (national ID or valid passport).

- **TIE (Identity card for foreign nationals)**

The **Identity Card for foreign nationals (*Targeta d'identitat d'estrangers, TIE*)** is a physical document that contains the identification details of the foreign national in question, mainly their NIE and type of stay or residence permit.

The TIE must be applied for by all foreign nationals who are not from the European Union, European Economic Space or Switzerland and who have received

authorisation to stay in Spain for longer than 6 months or a long-term-stay permit.

This document must be kept up to date. Even if you have a visa, a TIE is mandatory and you may incur a fine if you do not have one.

▷ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

You will need to have a Social Security number if you wish to pay your contributions to Spain's Social Security system and gain access to the public health-care system. Contributions to Social Security ensure access to medical care and cover sickness and maternity benefits, retirement pensions, indemnification and compensation for work-related accidents or disability and death.

A Social Security Number becomes a Membership Number as soon as the bearer starts his/her employment relationship and it is personal, unique and for life.

This is a mandatory procedure for everyone wanting to carry out a professional activity in Spanish territory, whether through employment or self-employment.

It is normally companies that deal with Social Security procedures on behalf of their salaried workers. By contrast, self-employed people have to apply for their Social Security number in person, by visiting their nearest office.



For further information on Spain's Social Security system, including a list of all the Social Security offices in Catalonia, visit: seg-social.es

▷ HEALTH-CARE CARD

You will need to have a **Personal Health-Care Card (Targeta sanitària individual, TSI)** to gain access to the Catalan public health-care system *CatSalut*. The TSI entitles you to be assisted by public health-care system throughout the Spanish territory in case you need it while you are in a trip or in a vacation. If you plan to move to another city outside Catalonia, then you must apply for the health-care card of the Spanish region where you will live.

That card is individual, personal and non-transferable. Therefore, every member of a family must have their own TSI, irrespective of their age.

Even if you have private medical insurance, you are still strongly advised to have a TSI for different reasons.

In the first place, the public health-care system is internationally recognised. The TSI provides you with free access to your allocated public health-care system's services and centres and with co-funded medication and other pharmaceutical products.

Second, if you are employed, having the card is essential for requesting sick leave in the event you fall ill. You can only obtain the sick-leave document that you have to provide your company with by visiting your allocated health care centre and seeing your GP.



For further information on the Catalan health-care service, visit: gencat.cat/salut or web.gencat.cat/es/temes/salut



PETS

You will need to carry out several procedures and actions if you wish to enter and reside in Barcelona with your pet. These procedures will vary depending on your country of origin and the process can take some time, so we recommend you consult your area's Spanish Consulate well before your planned move to Spain.

In any case, all pets must be vaccinated and have health certificates from their country of origin before they can enter Spain.

You will need to have a European Pet Passport if you wish to cross Europe's borders with your pet. This card, which is issued by an authorised vet, contains mandatory information on the animal and is valid for its entire life.

Once you are in Barcelona, you can have pets in your private home provided that they satisfy health and hygiene conditions and you look after the well-being and safety of the animals throughout their lives.

In addition, you shall be responsible and liable for your pets outside your home. That means all dogs must be on a leash in public spaces, except in recreational areas specially intended for dogs. Dog excrement must be collected in a bag and dumped in a grey container or in a bin.

It is against the law to abandon pets and it is considered a very serious offence to put the life of an animal or people at risk.

Owners of dogs, cats, ferrets and wild animals in captivity are legally obliged to register them with the Barcelona Register for Pets and Wild Animals in Captivity. To that end, you will have to have your animal electronically identified in advance, through an authorised microchip, and have a health certificate issued by a vet.

Although you are not legally obliged to do so, we recommend you have any other type of animal registered for reasons of security (in case it is lost or stolen) and health and environmental control.

If your dog is considered potentially dangerous, you must also obtain a permit for owning this type of animal.

DRIVING LICENCE AND VEHICLE TRANSFER

If you wish to drive in Spanish territory, you must have a valid driver's licence.

The conditions for a valid driver's licence will vary depending on country of origin. There are three separate categories:

- Citizens from the EU, European Economic Space and Switzerland do not have to change their driver's licence; however, if their stay is very long (more than 6 months), they are recommended to do so.
- Citizens from countries having a treaty with Spain are legally obliged to carry out the procedure for having their licence exchanged.
- Citizens from countries without any treaty with Spain will have to obtain a Spanish driver's licence, although they can use an international driver's licence during their first year of arrival in Spain. They will have to attend classes and take both theory and practice tests to obtain their driver's licence. Some driving schools allow you to study and take your tests in English.

Note that driver's licences in Spain have an expiry date and have to be periodically renewed.

As for vehicles, you can bring over and drive your car in Spain for six months, without having to register it, after which you will need to register it. The process usually takes two months.

Note that, if you wish to import a vehicle, it must have been in your possession for over 12 months from the time you received its consular registration.



For further information on the validity of driver's licences in Spain, the process for their exchange and for registering a vehicle, visit the Directorate-General of Traffic's website: dgt.es

3

Currency and banking

20



▷ CURRENCY

The euro has been Spain's official currency since 1 January 2002.

▷ CHOOSING A BANK

There are several banking options in Barcelona, from local banks to branches of major international institutions and large investment banks. It is a good idea to ask your bank in your home country about the possibility of opening an account with a corresponding branch in Barcelona if there is one. Some banks have English-speaking staff at specific branches to help foreigners.

Many banks also offer excellent online banking services in different languages. You can visit several banks or do research online to find out which institutions provide services that suit your financial needs best.

You should be mindful of bank charges and fees. There may be a fee for opening a current account (*compte corrent*) and an annual charge for maintenance. Most banks charge a fee for your debit or credit cards (*targetes de dèbit o crèdit*) and expect to also pay small charges for withdrawals from other banks' ATM (*caixers*) or for other transactions. A paycheque account (*compte nòmina*) typically has lower charges but must be the account your salary or regular income is paid into.

▷ OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Spanish banks offer two types of bank accounts to international clients: resident and non-resident accounts.

If you plan to live in Barcelona it's better to open a resident bank account as it is more convenient. However, to get the tax resident status you need to meet different requirements: to have spent more than 183 days in Spain in the calendar year, to have in Spain the centre of your economic activities or interests (having a business or employment), or that your spouse and minor child who depend on you are resident in Spain.

It can be difficult to meet these requirements if you just have moved or you plan to stay for a short period. In this case, you can open a non-resident bank account. As well as the standard documentation, you may have to prove that you are not a tax resident by providing a certificate of non-residency (*certificat de no residència*). If you do become a resident after opening the account, you must notify the bank.

In general, the documentation you need to open an account vary depending on the bank institution, but you will need to provide sensitive information to verify your identity: government-issued identification document (ID) such as your passport and any document containing the Identity Number for foreign nationals (*Número d'identificació d'estrangers, NIE*). In order to protect themselves and comply with regulation, banks might ask to provide more documents, such as proof of address and the tax code in your country of origin (Social Security number or tax identification number), among others.

Finally, you should know that you can open an account in euros or in a foreign currency. There is usually no minimum deposit for opening a bank account in euros, but there may be one for opening an account in another currency.



▷ BANKING HOURS

Most banks are open from Monday to Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 2.00 or to 2.30 p.m. Some also open on Thursday afternoons from 5.00 to 7.45 p.m. from October to May.

▷ CREDIT CARDS

Major credit and debit cards are accepted in almost all shops, restaurants, hotels and many other services, including Metro ticket machines, taxis and parking machines. Contactless payment is increasingly common in Barcelona and major banks are now offering payment via mobile phone. You can also use your credit or debit card to withdraw money from a cash dispenser, which provide instructions in different languages.

▷ PAYING BILLS

Cheques are rarely used in Spain - instead, a convenient way to pay recurring bills such as rent, electricity and telephone bills is through direct debit (*domiciliació bancària*).

To have your bill payments deducted directly from your bank account, you must first authorise them with your bank. Just fill in the forms instructing your bank to pay these bills and inform them of your account details. Your bank statements will notify the amount paid on your behalf and to whom.

4 Taxes




All residents must pay taxes applied by the different levels of public administration: the Spanish Government, the regional and the local governments.

 **Barcelona's Municipal Tax Office**
(*Institut Municipal d'Hisenda de Barcelona*)
barcelona.cat/hisenda

 **Tax Office of Catalonia**
(*Agència Tributària de Catalunya*)
gencat.cat/atc

 **Spanish Tax Office**
(*Agència Tributària espanyola*)
agenciatributaria.es

The tax system in Spain is complex and so this guide will focus on general information. An expert can assist you with reliable, complete information for your particular circumstance.

 The information in this section is general and does not cover each and every specific situation and exception. Moreover, rules and regulations may change. Therefore, the legal information given here is not guaranteed. Seek professional and specialised help in case of concerns regarding a specific legal issue about taxation in Spain.

▷ INCOME TAX (IRPF)

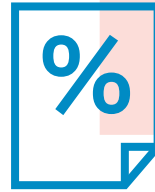
Impost sobre la renda de les persones físiques (IRPF) is the main personal and direct income tax for residents in Spain. Tax is calculated on individuals based on their income and other personal circumstances.

A foreigner acquires tax residency in Spain when they reside in Spain more than 183 days throughout the calendar year or the hub of his/her professional or business activity is located in Spain for more than one year. In this case, he/she must file tax returns, called *la declaració de renda*, between April and June. You can file your taxes yourself, or have a tax preparer (*gestor*) assist you. The Tax Administration (*Agència Tributaria*) also offers free appointments to file your taxes.

▷ NON-RESIDENT INCOME TAX (IRNR)

A foreigner has to meet certain requirements in order to obtain resident status. A key aspect to be considered a resident is having spent more than 183 days in Spain in the calendar year. Therefore, the *Impost sobre la renda de no residents (IRNR)* applies not only to non-residents but also to new residents who make an income during the first 183 days of their stay.

The income affected by this tax is subject to a fixed tax rate of 24%. In contrast, people with tax residence in Spain are taxed according to a growing rate by quotes, with a maximum rate up to 45%.



▷ SPECIAL TAX REGIME FOR WORKERS MOVED TO SPAIN

There is a special tax regime for workers that move to Spain. It is popularly known as “Beckham Law” because the world-famous football player David Beckham was one of the first individuals that benefited from it. However, subsequently, amendments were made to the law and today professional athletes are excluded.

The privilege of this special regime lies in the fact that the taxpayer will only be taxable for the income obtained in Spain, to which a tax rate of 24% shall be applied to the first 600,000 euros during the year of acquisition of residence and for the following five years. An additional benefit on this special regime is a reduction of the reporting obligations to the Tax Administration.

This can be very interesting for managers, scientists or workers who are transferred to Spain because of an employment contract. These people can choose to apply for this special tax regime if he or she meets certain legal requirements (among others, not having resided in Spain during the previous 10 years). But the Tax Agency must be informed within six months from the date of commencement of the activity, that is, from the date of registration of the worker in the Spanish Social Security system.

▷ VALUE ADDED TAX (IVA)

The *Impost sobre el valor afegit (IVA)* is the equivalent of Value added tax (VAT). It is a consumption tax, applied to the sales price. IVA is charged at 21% on most goods and services in Spain, although some goods and services are charged with reduced rates or are exempt. VAT is included in the price of most everyday transactions, but some major purchases quote the price “without VAT” so take that into account.

▷ PROPERTY TAX (IBI)

The City Councils charge an annual tax, known as IBI (*Impost sobre Bens Immobles*) to owners, beneficial owners or leaseholders of any property (flat, garage space, storeroom, shop, house, office, etc.). If the property changes hands, the new owner will be liable for the tax from the following year.

If you own property but are not a resident of Spain, you will be responsible for regular property taxes (IBI) as well as a non-resident income tax.

▷ VEHICLE TAX (IVTM)

The owners of registered vehicles fit to circulate on public roads must pay an annual tax: *Impost sobre vehicles de tracció mecànica (IVTM)*. This tax is managed by the city council of the municipality where the vehicle is registered.

The official registration of the vehicle is done by the Traffic Authority (*Direcció General de Tràfic*).



For more information,
go to dgt.es





Plaça de la Vila de Gràcia

5

Housing

▷ CHOOSING A PLACE TO LIVE

What is the best place to live in Barcelona? The answer, of course, will vary according to personal preferences. If you have children, you may want to choose a family-friendly neighbourhood, whereas young professionals may prefer to be closer to the action in the city centre such as Born or Gràcia. If you are looking for cheaper properties or rentals, you should consider the towns in the metropolitan area.



▶ THE NEIGHBOURHOODS OF BARCELONA

Barcelona is divided into ten administrative districts, each one with its own district council. These districts are Ciutat Vella, Eixample, Gràcia, Horta-Guinardó, Les Corts, Nou Barris, Sant Andreu, Sant Martí, Sants-Montjuïc and Sarrià-Sant Gervasi. The ten districts are subdivided into 73 neighbourhoods or *barris*.



To discover the city and its neighbourhoods, use the web app Places of Interest in the City (available in English) at barcelona.cat/apps



Visit also lameva.barcelona.cat/en/living-in-bcn see section Districts and Neighbourhoods

The following is a brief overview of the most popular neighbourhoods of Barcelona.

Barri Gòtic / El Born / El Raval / La Barceloneta

Ciutat Vella, meaning Old City, is the historic centre of Barcelona. This district, with its Roman, Medieval and Gothic architecture, narrow, winding streets and intriguing mix of old and new, is a magnet for tourists and locals alike. The *Barri Gòtic* or Gothic Quarter, el Born, el Raval and la Barceloneta stand out as the most interesting neighbourhoods in the district. The area features two of the best food markets of the city, Boqueria and Santa Caterina.

The Gothic Quarter holds the remnants of Barcelona's Roman past. Its main attractions are the magnificent Barcelona Cathedral, Plaça Sant Jaume and its beautiful government buildings, the buzzing nightlife in and around Carrer de Ferran and Plaça Reial, and the interesting shops in the commercial area of Portal de l'Àngel.

Nearby is La Rambla, at the top of which is Plaça Catalunya. The neighbourhood is a short walk from Barcelona's other attractions and has excellent public transport links to other parts of the city.

El Born, once a medieval trading venue, is now one of the most fashionable areas of Barcelona. It is known for its vibrant nightlife and excellent shopping. It is also home to the famous Santa Maria del Mar Cathedral and the Picasso Museum. El Born is located between Via Laietana and Barceloneta.

It is a ten-minute walk from La Rambla and from the beach. Parc de Ciutadella and the Barcelona Zoo are also nearby. Ciutat Vella is a trendy district that draws a hip, youthful crowd. Many of the buildings in this area have been renovated and turned into rental apartments, which have become popular among young local professionals, expats and tourists.

El Raval stretches from la Rambla to the Avinguda del Paral·lel. This used to be one of the most underprivileged areas of the city but it has become a fashionable place to live among young people, probably because of its multi-cultural population and the striking blend of old buildings with trendy shops and new cultural spaces.

This is where the Boqueria market and the modern art museum (*Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona*, also known as MACBA) and the centre of modern culture (*Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona*, aka CCCB) are located.²

La Barceloneta is the city's marine quarter, located between the port and the beaches. The narrow streets, the working-class atmosphere, the clothes hung out to dry and the sea smell contribute to the genuine character of this neighbourhood. The area is very popular among tourists, as it is close to Barcelona beaches and it boasts a wide variety of restaurants and bars offering tapas and seafood. You can also find iconic landmarks such as the sculpture *L'Estel ferit* (The Wounded Shooting Star) and the *Estació de França* (the French train station).





THE DISTRICTS OF BARCELONA

- 1 Ciutat Vella
- 2 Eixample
- 3 Sants-Montjuïc
- 4 Les Corts
- 5 Sarrià-Sant Gervasi
- 6 Gràcia
- 7 Horta-Guinardó
- 8 Nou Barris
- 9 Sant Andreu
- 10 Sant Martí



Eixample

The Eixample neighbourhood is by far the largest in Barcelona. It stretches from Plaça Espanya to Plaça de les Glories Catalanes and from Ciutat Vella to Gràcia.

The whole area is set out in a grid, with each block having an inner courtyard. This grid design, a masterpiece of 19th-century Catalan urban planner Ildefons Cerdà, makes it very easy to find one's way in the neighbourhood.

The Eixample contains the largest concentration of modernist architecture in Europe. It is also the economic and commercial hub of Barcelona and a high class residential neighbourhood. Passeig de Gràcia, home to most of Barcelona's exclusive designer shops and restaurants, is at the heart of the Eixample, and divides it into two: Left Eixample (*Eixample Esquerra*) and Right Eixample (*Eixample Dreta*). Also on this boulevard are two of Antoni Gaudí's most iconic buildings: Casa Batlló and Casa Milà.

In the Eixample, one can find spacious apartments with high ceilings inside elegant Catalan Modernist buildings with long corridors and elaborate facades.

The inner courtyards in each block give most buildings a natural source of light both in front and behind. This neighbourhood is very central and has excellent transport links to the rest of the city. It appeals to residents of all age groups.



Passeig de Gràcia in the Eixample

Gràcia

Gràcia is just off the upper end of Passeig de Gràcia, but it feels like you're leaving Barcelona and going into a whole different world. Gràcia was in fact an independent village that was absorbed by Barcelona in 1897.

Gràcia has a network of narrow streets and charming bench-lined squares. It is home to pavement cafés and bistros, low-key nightspots, alternative theatres and quirky shops that draw a youthful clientele. Yet behind its trendy, bohemian character lies a traditional neighbourhood of proud, elderly locals.

Poblenou

Poblenou was a traditional industrial area of Barcelona that at the end of the 20th century was full of abandoned factories and empty production premises. The city decided to transform 200 hectares of the post-industrial neighbourhood into an innovative district offering modern spaces for intensive knowledge-based activities, creating an attractive place to live and to work. This long-term and ambitious project, named 22@Barcelona, began in 2001 and is shaped around three axes: the urban, economic and social renewal of the area.

The success of this project has helped to turn Poblenou into a new technological and innovation district, as well as a trendy neighbourhood for young people and families.

Many of Poblenou's old warehouse buildings have been converted into trendy lofts and studios which attract artists, entrepreneurs and organisations that promote creativity and innovation. This vibrant activity, together with the fact that the neighbourhood is close to the beach and boasts the charming Rambla del Poblenou, have made Poblenou one of the new preferred neighbourhoods to live in.



Diagonal Mar buildings

Vila Olímpica

This was the site of the Olympic Village of the 1992 Games held in Barcelona and is very close to the Port Olímpic and the beaches.

After the Olympics, the buildings were transformed into apartments, and the whole area was renovated to accommodate gardens, terraces and community areas. New buildings were constructed in the surrounding areas along Avinguda d'Icària and Carrer de la Marina.

Vila Olímpica is well connected to the rest of the city by metro, tram and bus services. It is also within walking distance of Parc de la Ciutadella, the Barcelona Zoo and the Poblenou neighbourhood. It has a modern shopping centre with a supermarket and a cinema which puts on foreign language films in their original version.

Diagonal Mar

It is a new neighbourhood located at the final stretch of Diagonal Avenue on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, developed as part of the whole regeneration of the city's seafront.

The wide streets and avenues are lined with numerous high-rise, commonhold-style apartment buildings, as well as

walk-up complexes with community areas, underground car parks and swimming pools. There is a huge designer park with a lake and many playgrounds and recreational facilities. Diagonal Mar also has a large shopping centre, a convention and conference centre, and several upscale hotels and office buildings. Many of the apartments in this area are rented out to employees of the multinational companies that have set up offices nearby. In fact, this is one of the favourite areas for newcomers.

Pedralbes

Pedralbes is a quiet, exclusive residential area with luxury buildings and wide green spaces.

Some developments have private gardens and swimming pools. This neighbourhood also houses many of the city's international and private schools and the ESADE and IESE business schools.

The area has easy access to motorways and the airport and is fairly well served by buses going to the city centre.

Sant Gervasi

Sant Gervasi, at the foot of Tibidabo hill, is another quiet, upmarket residential area. It has a distinguished history, being the site of the Bellesguard, built by King Martin I at the beginning of the 15th century and completely refurbished by Antoni Gaudí in the early 20th century. Spacious second homes and Catalan Modernist houses remain, as well as many convents and religious schools.

Gaudí's Les Teresianes convent is particularly remarkable. The neighbourhood also boasts the beautiful hilltop parks of Monterols and El Putxet, which command good views over Barcelona. The neighbourhood has a great community atmosphere and is very popular with Barcelona families. It also offers a good selection of shops and restaurants.

Les Corts

Les Corts is a neighbourhood with a very heterogeneous urban fabric, as it combines buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries with more modern constructions. This is the oldest and most central area of the old municipality of Les Corts which was incorporated into Barcelona in 1897. In the highest part, situated above Avinguda Diagonal, Neolithic and Iberian remains were found as well as a Roman necropolis.

Turó Parc

This area features properties that overlook Turó Parc, one of Barcelona's most beautiful green spaces. Excellent shops and restaurants are close by in the commercial areas of Pau Casals, Plaça Francesc Macià and Avinguda Diagonal.

Sarrià

Sarrià, a charming old neighbourhood at the foot of the Collserola natural park, has a historic quarter that has preserved most of its original personality that so enthused the Catalan bourgeoisie in the 19th century. At that time, Sarrià was very prosperous and the architecture reflects this splendour through many Modernista houses. Sarrià was an independent town until 1921, when it was annexed by Barcelona. Despite that, it has retained its unique village appeal.



Carrer Major de Sarrià

▶ THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF BARCELONA

The following is a selection of some of the most popular towns in the metropolitan area for expatriate families.

Sant Just Desvern / Esplugues de Llobregat

Sant Just Desvern and Esplugues de Llobregat are municipalities in the Baix Llobregat region of the Barcelona metropolitan area.

They are located south of Barcelona, just 15 minutes by car to the city centre. Sant Just and Esplugues are quiet residential areas with vast green spaces and great views of the sea and the city of Barcelona. Many of the properties here are recently constructed apartments and houses with swimming pools. It is also possible to find detached, single-family homes in this area. It has all the essential commercial and public services.

Esplugues is home to the American and German schools and is thus very popular with residents from those countries.

Castelldefels / Gavà / Sitges

The history of Castelldefels can be traced back to the year 911. Its castle was built in the Middle Ages, as well as the towers of the original city wall, which can be found today in the city centre.

Castelldefels is 20 minutes away from the city centre and 10 minutes from the airport, taking either the C-246 or the A-16 motorways. The public transportation system is excellent, with both buses and trains to Barcelona leaving every 20 minutes from several locations throughout the area.

Bordered by a mile-long sandy beach to the east and hills to the west, Castelldefels has a mild climate. A favourite spot for tourists, it has many restaurants serving a variety of cuisines and a number of good hotels. Castelldefels is attractive to people

who like living near the sea and to families whose children go to one of the international schools located in the area.

The town of Gavà boasts four kilometres of coastline frequented by beach lovers and the mountains of Garraf Natural Park. It is one of the biggest municipalities in the Baix Llobregat area. It is located 15 kilometres from Barcelona and 10 kilometres from the international airport, and can be reached by bus, train and car. It is connected to Barcelona by the C-32 and C-246 motorways.

Sitges, a city about 35 kilometres south of Barcelona, is a very popular tourist destination. It is known worldwide for its beaches, nightspots and historical sites, as well as its annual Film Festival and Carnival (Mardi Gras). Many expatriate families live in Sitges' residential districts of Vallpineda, La Levantina, Quint Mar and Rocamar.

Sant Cugat / Vallès Occidental

Sant Cugat is a town in the Vallès Occidental area, just 12 kilometres away from Barcelona. Its strategic location and excellent transport links to the city allows many of its residents to live in Sant Cugat and work in Barcelona. Although it has grown in size and population, Sant Cugat has managed to preserve the essence of a quiet town, and its residents enjoy a high quality of life.

Sant Cugat offers new commonhold-style residential properties with common areas, swimming pools and gardens. Here it is also possible to find detached, single-family homes. This and the town's quiet, family-oriented atmosphere appeal to many expatriate families.

Sant Cugat has different residential areas, all well connected to each other and the city centre by buses and the FGC rail network. Larger flats and houses can be found in the Eixample area, an older residential part of town, and in Golf-Can Trabal, a residential zone of the town's Golf Club. Parc Central-Turó de Can Mates and Coll Favà-Volpelleres are Sant Cugat's newest residential areas. Parc Central and Coll Favà are the closest to the city centre. In all these zones you can find flats with communal areas and to a lesser

extent terraced houses. Other residential areas include Valldoreix and Mirasol, which were originally summer vacation destinations of Barcelona residents.

Other municipalities in Vallès Occidental also offer attractive housing options. Bellaterra, in the municipality of Cerdanyola del Vallès, is home to the campus of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB).

El Maresme

El Maresme is a county (comarca) located along the coast, between the Mediterranean Sea and Catalonia's coastal hills and bordering Vallès Oriental to the west. It has over 400,000 residents, 100,000 of which live in the capital and largest city, Mataró.

El Maresme is well connected to Barcelona by the old Royal Way (*Camí Real*), now the N-II main road, and by the Barcelona-Mataró railway, which was the first ever on the Iberian Peninsula when it was finished in 1848. More recent constructions are the Barcelona-Mataró section of the C-32, the first motorway in Spain, and its subsequent enlargement, the Mataró-Palafolls section.

El Maresme features long sandy beaches and beautiful hills. Its main sources of income are its vineyards, its textile and fishing industries, and tourism. Its tourist spots and residential areas are well equipped with hotels, restaurants, camping and leisure areas and sports facilities.



Sant Cugat del Vallès

▷ SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Newcomers who wish to book short-term accommodation in Barcelona while they search for a more permanent home will find a wealth of options in the city. However, Barcelona's popularity as a destination for short breaks and the many international events regularly hosted by the city give it a hotel occupancy rate of 75-85%, one of the highest in Europe. It is therefore advisable that you arrange your short-term accommodation at least two to three months before your arrival, so you can have more choices and get better rates.

Hotels

Barcelona offers a wide range of hotels located in convenient and attractive city areas to suit all tastes and budgets, from five-star luxury properties to midrange accommodation. The local market is mainly dominated by domestic hotel chains and independent hotels, although there is some presence from international operators.

Budget hotels and guesthouses

This type of accommodation is called a *pensió* or *hostal* in Catalan.

An *hostal* is different from the concept of a "hostel" in English. An *hostal* is a modest hotel, normally a family-run business, which is often smaller and less formal than a chain hotel. They are not categorised by the 5-star hotel rating but instead have their own 3-star rating system. Hostals provide quality accommodation at a much lower price, although they offer fewer facilities and services.

Serviced and self-catered apartments

These are fully furnished and equipped apartments available for short-term or long-term stays. They usually provide cooking facilities and all the modern conveniences of home. This type of accommodation is ideal for families and large groups.



▷ MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION

Any stay in a rental property longer than six months is considered medium or long-term accommodation.

If you are planning on a medium or long-term stay in Barcelona, you may want to consider renting a flat or a house.

When looking at this option, you should be aware that Spanish cities are usually made up of multi-family residential buildings, and Barcelona is no exception to this. Single-family detached homes with a garden or even semi-detached homes are not common in the city. Those who wish to live in this type of house can look to residential areas outside the city. Bear in mind that in Barcelona, socialising is mostly done outdoors or at restaurants and there is little entertaining at home. Bedrooms are considered a purely functional place to sleep and are often comparatively small.

Flats may be furnished or unfurnished. Furnished flats include basic living, dining and bedroom furniture and basic appliances such as a refrigerator, cooker and washing machine. You can negotiate the items to be included with the owner.

▶ RENTING A PROPERTY

Once you have chosen a flat to rent and the owner agrees to rent the property to you, the first thing to do is make a down payment. The down payment is equal to a month's rent and becomes part of the deposit once the lease is signed.

Owners reserve the right to choose a tenant based on their references and specific conditions. You should be able to show the owner your work contract, pay stubs and other proof of income, as well as a copy of your passport or residence card.

As for the legal part, you should take into account that the minimum period for renting a flat is 6 months (of forced fulfilment). Contracts are usually for 3 years (optional for the tenant and mandatory for the owner). You can tacitly renew one more year. The possibility is foreseen that the owner can recover his/her apartment for permanent housing, after the first year of the contract.

A tenant wishing to leave the property and terminate the contract is required to send written notification to the landlord at least two months in advance, specifying the date of cancellation of the contract.

Rent increases annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (*Index de Preus al Consum* or IPC).

Payments

The following are payments associated with rental contracts.

- **Current month's rent.**
- **Security deposit.** The tenant must pay a security deposit (*fiança*) equivalent to one month's rent for an unfurnished apartment and two months' rent for a furnished one. The deposit will be reimbursed to the tenant upon termination of the contract.
- **Bank guarantee.** Another possible requirement for renting an apartment is a bank guarantee (*aval bancari*). This requires the tenant to deposit three to six months' rent in a separate bank account for the duration of the rental contract. This amount

will remain untouched, while still earning interest, as a guarantee to the landlord. This is to provide the landlord with cash to cover outstanding rent and any legal expenses incurred in the eviction of a non-complying tenant. The full amount plus earned interest is reimbursed to the tenant upon termination of the contract. The guarantee is separate from the security deposit.

- **Agency fee.** Those renting through a rental agency must also pay a commission which is often equivalent to 10% of the annual rent plus 21% VAT (*Impost del Valor Afegit* or IVA).

You can make all the necessary payments by bank transfer from your Spanish bank account. You can also pay in cash or with a Spanish bank cheque, but not with a credit card.

Rent must be paid during the first five days of the month. The rent and utility bills are usually paid by direct debit from your Spanish bank account (see "Money and banking" section).

Tenant and landlord responsibilities

Properties for rent (or sell) must have an energy performance certificate which specifies CO₂ emissions compared to the dimensions of the building on a scale from A to G (being A the most efficient). This means the new tenant can consider energy efficiency as a factor in their decision to rent. Owners who wish to rent housing have to give this certificate to the tenant before closing the transaction.

After an initial inspection of the flat and a review of the inventory (if furnished), tenants have 15 to 30 days to report any damage found in the apartment and any repairs needed. Owners are obliged to take the necessary action. After the first month, tenants are responsible for normal wear and tear and repairs, with the exception of damage caused by structural faults, water-pipe breakage and flooding from outside sources. A good relationship with your landlord or administrator is highly recommended to ensure good communication and prompt solutions.

Pets

In general, not many owners accept pets in a rental apartment. Those who do may ask for an extra deposit.

▷ BUYING A HOUSE

The NIE is a legal requirement when buying property in Spain, so make sure you have obtained this before starting the buying process. You will also need a Spanish bank account to pay not only for the property itself, but also the applicable professional fees, taxes and charges on the purchase.

Another important step is to hire a reputable and independent solicitor (*advocat*). If you do not speak Spanish or Catalan, you can find a solicitor that can also translate essential documents and explain things you may not understand.

It also helps to consider your means of finance early on. Many overseas buyers in Spain purchase in cash, but you also have the option to take out a mortgage, either with a Spanish bank or your local bank's subsidiary business in Spain. Maximum loans are generally 80% of the purchase price.

Once you have chosen a property to buy, your solicitor should then carry out all the necessary checks on it to ensure that the sale is legal and that there are no debts secured against the property. Be aware that in Spain mortgages can be passed on to the new owner.

Properties for sale must have an energy performance certificate which specifies CO² emissions compared to the dimensions of the building on a scale from A to G (being A the most efficient). This means the new buyer can consider energy efficiency as a factor in their decision to buy. Owners who wish to sell housing have to give this certificate to the buyer before closing the transaction.

Once your solicitor has provided you with written confirmation that everything is in order and checked that there are no burdens on the property, you should sign an earnest money contract (*contracte d'arres*) setting

the term of the final sale before a notary, stating the price and the method of payment. You do not need to sign anything else until the signing of the title deeds (*escritura pública*).

When you sign the earnest money contract, you pay a sum which is usually 10% of the sale price. The contract must provide a comprehensive description of the property's specifications and characteristics. If the owner then decides not to sell or is in breach of the earnest money contract, they have to refund double the amount paid as earnest money, i.e. multiplied by two. If the buyer breaches the earnest money contract, they will forfeit the amount paid.

The full title deeds are signed by the seller, the buyer and a notary on the completion date and usually take a few months to process.

The buyer has to assume, apart from the price of the dwelling, the corresponding taxes (the Value-Added Tax (IVA) if it is a new dwelling or the Property Transfer Tax (ITP) if the dwelling is second hand) and other related costs such as the notary public fees, the ones arising from the registration in the Property Register or the constitution of the mortgage (if necessary).

In the case of constituting a mortgage, you have to assume the costs of an insurance policy that covers, as a minimum, risks from fortuitous causes or force majeure, and damage to third parties.





▷ MUNICIPAL HOUSING POLICY

Barcelona City Council wants to ensure everyone has a decent standard of living. For this reason, it is working hard on implementing a housing policy that addresses the current urgent situation some residents have been going through over the last few years and that acts on the specific issues that make it difficult for people to access housing in the city.

The new municipal housing policy involves working in a variety of areas, such as: promoting new protected and affordable housing; bringing empty flats into the rented housing stock; redeveloping in socially proactive and ecologically efficient ways; promoting new forms of housing access and management; attending to, accompanying and finding financial solutions for people unable to meet the payments for their homes and providing mediation and information as key tools for guaranteeing the rules of the game for everyone.



To know how to get access to public housing, find the necessary information and advice for renting or buying accommodation, as well as new tenancy formulas, such as cohousing, visit habitatge.barcelona/en

▷ UTILITIES

Rental contracts include a clause stating that utilities are installed. This means that all you need to do is call the utility companies to request a name or account change. Administrators usually offer to take care of this.

If the utilities are not available, it can take up to a week for them to be set up. Charges may apply. To get your utility service connected, you are required to present your NIE or passport number, your bank account details, the number and signing date of your rental contract, the last bill and a *Cédula d'Habitabilitat*, a document that certifies the property's fitness for occupation. Connection fees may apply.

All utilities (gas, water, electricity and telephone) are usually paid by direct debit. You should receive a bill before the money is deducted from your account, so remember to check that the amount deducted matches the bill.

Electricity, gas and telephone services can be contracted with any company, given that the market has been deregulated.

Electricity

Electricity is priced using the international system of a small standing charge and a further charge per kilowatt-hour consumed. This rate decreases as consumption increases. Electricity is billed every month based on the power rating and the kilovolt, which in Spain is 220 volts AC with a frequency of 50 hertz.

Spain uses Type C or Europlug power outlets, with two round pins. Those from outside Europe may need an adapter for any appliances from their home country they wish to use in Spain. Those from countries using the 110-volt system also need a voltage converter if your electronic equipment doesn't include one already.

Gas

Mains or bottled gas is available in Barcelona. Many homes have a combined gas hot-water and heating system. You are billed for gas every two months. Like all utility bills, gas bills can be paid by direct debit. In historic buildings in the city centre, bottled butane gas is still common and you will see delivery trucks with their characteristic orange bottles.

Water

In Barcelona, water is supplied exclusively by Aigües de Barcelona. Bills are sent out every three months.

 **Aigües de Barcelona**
Tel: +34 900 710 710
aiguesdebarcelona.es

Tap water in Barcelona is safe, and depending on your neighbourhood and your building's pipes, it can be quite good. Despite this, many residents use a filter or prefer to drink bottled water.

Landline telephones

There are several national and a few regional providers of fixed-line telephone services in Spain. Different providers offer a wide range of plans, including flat-rate charges (*tarifas planes*), and it is up to you to shop around for the best deal. Remember, however, that most fixed lines are still provided by Movistar, the long-standing national telephone company, even if you decide to use another provider for your calling charges.

Providers also offer standard services such as call waiting, call redirect and voice mail. Having a landline installed generally takes four to five days, but it can take longer in some cases. All calls within Spain are billed in the same way. You pay an amount for establishing the call and then a per-minute charge applies. All charges are subject to VAT.

Spain's country code is 34. All major cities in Spain have their own prefixes. Barcelona's prefix is 93, while Madrid's is 91.

Mobile phones

Spain operates on a GSM network. If you currently own an unlocked GSM phone, it will work in Spain with a new SIM card. When choosing a mobile-phone service provider and pricing plan, consider when and where you usually call.

Prepaid and contract rate plans can either be hourly or universal. With hourly rates, tariffs are much lower in the early morning and late in the day and are higher during business hours. Universal rates offer one fixed rate regardless of the time of day, but this is typically more expensive. Providers also offer special promotions that are worth looking into.

You can choose between a prepaid phone and a contract. A prepaid phone offers more flexibility. To get more credit for your prepaid phone, you can buy recharge cards or buy credits through your phone from any cash dispenser or online. All prepaid-phone users are required by law to present their ID (identification) to their mobile-phone provider.

Alternatively, you can sign a contract. With a contract, you get monthly bills, lower calling rates and better deals on new phones. The typical length of a contract is one year. If you cancel before this, you will usually have to pay a penalty.

To sign a contract, you are required to present an identity document and a recent bank statement. Your phone bill is also paid through direct debit.





Internet

It is fairly easy to get high-speed Internet access in Spain, and Barcelona has a growing fibre optic network besides offering ADSL nearly everywhere.

In addition to the monthly fee, providers often charge a sign-up fee (quota d'alta), but many operators waive or reduce this to attract more customers.

High-speed access usually requires a contract of at least one year, with associated penalties for early termination. Many Internet packages are bundled with telephone and television services, including premium sports, cinema and children's programming.

There are also several Wi-Fi (pronounced wee-fee in Spanish and Catalan) options in Barcelona. The city has more than 2,000 hotspots with free access on the streets and on municipal premises such as public libraries, civic centres or markets.

Barcelona City Council has launched a range of ICT-based services to offer Barcelona's residents an improved public service with greater flexibility, accessibility and speed. For instance, mobile phones can be used to access the city agenda of what's on, the map or the directory of facilities, centres and services.

The City Council also has information services specially designed for access using mobile devices.



For more information, visit

barcelona.cat/apps

barcelona.cat/wifi

▶ DOMESTIC SERVICE

If you need domestic help you can choose to hire a live-in service person, daytime help, part-time help or a cleaning person. If you hire a home employee directly, you must sign a contract (full-time or part-time) and take care of Social Security procedures on behalf of your employee. A professional agency can find the right person for you and help you with administrative issues.

▶ WASTE MANAGEMENT

Bins sited throughout the city enable easy and accessible separate waste collection. There are bins for organic waste (brown), glass (green), packaging, plastic and cans (yellow), cardboard and paper (blue) and other waste (grey). Waste separation is rounded off with a number of green point recycling centres (permanent facilities in each district and mobile ones). Other types of waste require specific handling: furniture and junk are collected from the street one day a week, depending on your address, while the city also has special bins for used clothing and collection systems for debris and asbestos cement.

Barcelona currently has three different types of waste collection:

- Bin system, the most widespread in the city's various neighbourhoods
- Pneumatic system, cleaner and used in Gràcia, Vila Olímpica and Diagonal Mar
- Door to door system, especially in the historic centre as their streets are too narrow for bins and rubbish collection vehicle



For more information on waste management, visit

lameva.barcelona.cat/en/living-in-bcn
see section Waste Management

amb.cat Medi Ambient (Environment)
section

arc.cat Agència de Residus de Catalunya

6 Health

▶ PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Spain has one of the best public health systems in the world which provides universal care to all of its citizens.

The *ambulatori*, or, officially, the *Centre d'Atenció Primària (CAP)*, is a public health centre where medical care is provided for free and is the first point of contact for citizens wishing to access healthcare. They perform diagnoses, resolve common health problems, provide social assistance and also offer home care services. For more serious healthcare issues, there are hospitals, which perform acute diagnoses, administer specialised treatments and carry out surgical operations.

There are 53 CAPs in Barcelona, distributed throughout the city's districts. The patients of each CAP are determined by area of residence. When you register, you will be assigned a general practitioner or your own personal family doctor and, if you have children, a paediatrician.



Doctors work at certain hours and you will be asked to choose a regular time slot that suits you for a visit to your doctor. Usually you can get to see your primary-care doctor within a day or two after requesting an appointment.

Except in the case of emergencies, you must go through your primary-care doctor to have access to a specialist. Also note that public dental care only covers preventive, diagnosis and therapeutic care (such as dental extractions in case of infection or inflammation and preventive treatment to pregnant women), and services such as dental extractions of healthy teeth, cleanings, dental implants or orthodontics are excluded.

To register and receive your health card from CatSalut, the Catalan Health Service, you need to go to your nearest CAP and present your City Council registration certificate (*empadronament*), some form of identification, proof you are working as an employee or freelancer in Spain, and your Social Security registration. People who are not registered in the Social Security system must have public or private health insurance which covers them while they are residing in Spain.

Any European Union citizen can enjoy full and unlimited treatment in the Catalan Health Service and are entitled to a European Health Insurance card.



For more information on the Catalan Healthcare Service, visit the official website of CatSalut gencat.cat/salut or web.gencat.cat/en/temes/salut



HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Emergency care is administered by teams in primary care centres and hospitals, as well as via the telephone line 061 (CatSalut Responds), an emergency service that covers the entire Catalan territory, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

061 CatSalut Responds is useful for pre-hospital emergency situations and provides health information and advice both in ordinary and in extraordinary circumstances. It is provided by 200 medical professionals (doctors, nurses and technicians) who are experienced in giving over-the-phone and written health advice and has a translation and interpreting service.

Primary care centre professionals are usually able to resolve most health emergencies within their normal work schedule. Outside these hours, patients can attend Primary Care Emergency Centres, which operate 24 hours a day, every day of the year. They operate in consultation with the emergency hospital services and the SEM (*Servei d'Emergències Mèdiques*), the emergency medical service.



Healthcare assistance over the phone
Tel: 061

HOSPITALS

Barcelona has 58 hospitals of which 12 are public and 46 private. Of those 46 private hospitals, 24 are part of the Public Network of Hospitals of the National Health System. Those hospitals provide excellent emergency services and elective and non-elective medical treatment. They are staffed by some of the best medical professionals in the country and are equipped with the latest in medical technology.


Here are the city's main hospitals. Notice that these websites are available in English.

 **Hospital Clínic de Barcelona**
hospitalclinic.org

 **Hospital del Mar**
parcdesalutmar.cat

 **Hospital de Sant Pau**
santpau.es

 **Hospital Universitari Vall d'Hebron**
vhebron.net

 For more information on hospitals and medical centres in the Barcelona area, visit barcelona.cat/salut


PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

Private insurance is readily available, and is often used as a supplement to public health care. Providers (*mútues*) usually have their own network of hospitals, clinics and laboratories, and offer some services not covered by the public system. Note that most companies only cover care provided by medical professionals on their list, called a *quadre mèdic*, although some refund a certain percentage of the fees charged by professionals not on the list.

PHARMACIES

For minor aches and pains, you can go to your nearest pharmacy and ask a pharmacist for advice. Spanish pharmacists are highly qualified and can give you advice on which over-the-counter drugs to take and how to take them.

Late-night pharmacies, called *farmàcies de guàrdia*, are open during weekends and holidays. Some pharmacies are open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

 For information about pharmacies in Barcelona, visit barcelona.cat/salut in the *Pharmacies* section

MATERNITY AND PATERNITY

Barcelona offers high-standard maternity facilities that range from large hospitals to smaller clinics.

Each birth must be registered in a document called Family Book (*Llibre de Família*) within 8 days of the child's birth, usually at the Civil Registry. Some hospitals provide a service allowing you to register the child from there.



Maternity

The leave period, for those who have worked for at least 180 days, is 16 weeks with full pay, the first six weeks of which must be taken by the mother. The remaining 10 weeks may be taken by the mother, the father or both. The mother must fulfil the following requirements to qualify for a leave:

- Those between 21 and 26 years of age on the date of the birth must have contributed to Social Security for 90 days within the seven years immediately prior to the start of the leave period or for 180 days throughout their working life prior to that date.
- Those over 26 years of age on the date of the birth must have contributed to Social Security for 180 days within the seven years immediately prior to the start of the leave period or for 360 days throughout their working life prior to that date.

Paternity

All fathers who have worked for at least 360 days are entitled to 15 days leave as follows:

- 2 days of work leave, with full pay, at the child's birth (the day of birth and the following).
- Plus the right to take a leave of 13 uninterrupted days (either full or part-time) and to receive a paternity benefit covered by the Social Security System. This leave must be taken during the 16 weeks of the maternity leave or immediately after.

Requirements are:

- Being affiliated or in a situation similar to affiliation.
- Having contributed for 180 days in the 7 years immediately prior to the date when the work contract was suspended, or alternatively having contributed for 360 days in all your working life before the above-mentioned date.



For more information on maternity and paternity leaves, visit seg-social.es/Internet_6/index.htm (see section Workers > Benefits)

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Barcelona is considered to be a friendly city for people with disabilities. It has one of the best accessible urban environments amongst European cities. As an example, nearly 90% of the streets are accessible for wheelchair users and quite a lot of the traffic lights are adapted for people with visual disabilities.

Public transport is easily accessible: all bus lines are accessible, as well as an increasing number of metro stations.

Other special services available are the support service at the beaches in summer, adapted municipal information services, accessible sports facilities and accessible game zones for children with disabilities.



For more information, visit barcelona.cat/accessible





Street in Ciutat Vella

▶ ELDERLY PEOPLE OR DEPENDANTS

Barcelona offers diverse social services for its senior citizens and their families. There is a Home care service for people (mainly, but not limited to senior citizens) or families that have difficulties carrying out basic activities or need support with their personal and social development. It includes support with personal hygiene, food preparation, administration of medicine, personal mobility and home cleaning.

There is a Tele-assistance service for which a device is given to senior citizens or people with a disability that warns of situations of risk in the home, 24-hour permanent care and immediate action in case of emergency.

The Pink Card (*targeta rosa*) is offered to disabled or elderly people, providing free or reduced cost access to metropolitan public transport, with no distance or time limitation.



More information at
ajuntament.barcelona.cat/targetarosa

There is also a Senior travel programme provided in collaboration with the Institute for the Elderly and Social Service (IMSERSO). Barcelona City Council reserves 2,000 spaces on the State IMSERSO Tourism Programme and partially subsidises them for holders of a Pink Card.



▶ STD AND HIV INFORMATION AND TEST POINTS

In Barcelona there is a public health centre, CAP Drassanes, that has a specialised unit to deal with sexually transmitted diseases (STD).



CAP Drassanes

Avinguda Drassanes, 17-21
08001 Barcelona.
Tel: 934 414612

If you need information about human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), you can contact the following associations that focus especially on the LGTBI community:



BCNcheckpoint bcncheckpoint.com



STOPSIDA stopsida.org

7

Education

▷ CHOOSING A SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Deciding on a school for your child could depend on their age, previous educational background, languages spoken, how long you plan to live in Barcelona and finances, among many others.

Families who are likely to move frequently from one country to another during the children's school years tend to choose an international school so that the children will have some degree of educational continuity regardless of the family's location.

If you plan to live in Spain for a number of years, you may want to enrol your children in a regular Catalan school. If you plan to be in Spain for a short while, then return to your home country, you may want to give your children the experience of a year in a Catalan school, or you may want them to continue with the kind of programme they followed back home.

Cost can also be a decisive factor, and finding the perfect school might condition where you want to live.



▷ THE LOCAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Catalonia and Spain, **compulsory education** spans the ten years from 6 to 16 years of age. A child's year of birth, taken as the calendar year in which they were born, will indicate which school year/class they will attend, with the cut-off date being 31 December.

The local education system is broken down into stages, levels and years, or grades, of learning.

The city of Barcelona has a strong network of **Municipal Nursery Schools**, called *Escoles Bressol*, which care for children 4 months to 3 years old. There are also many private childcare centres. While not obligatory, the vast majority of local children attend **preschool** starting the year they turn 3 years old, until they are 6. Public preschool is free and universal and often referred to popularly as *Parvulari* or *Escola Infantil*.

Primary school (*Escola Primària*) lasts six years and runs from *Primer* (Year 1) to *Sisè* (Year 6).

At the age of 12, children start secondary school (*institut*), which is a four-year course of **compulsory secondary education** called ESO (*Educació Secundària Obligatoria*).

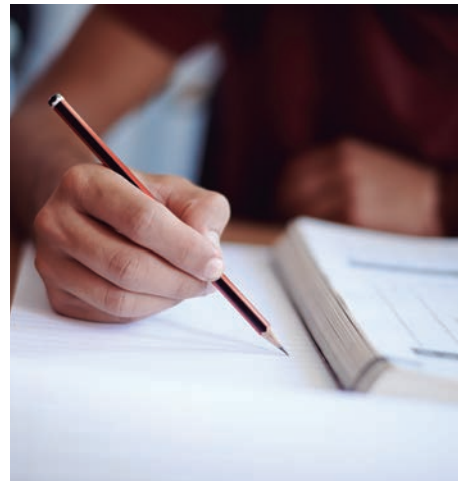
Those who finish compulsory education at 16 may either opt for the two-year pre-university course known locally as *Batxillerat* or for **Basic Vocational Training** (*Formació Professional de Grau Mitjà*).

▷ TYPES OF SCHOOLS

In the Barcelona area, there are three main types of schools to become familiar with:

- **Public school** (*escola pública*). Publicly funded, tuition-free, secular, and owned by the government. The state curriculum is approved by the Catalan Ministry of Education. State-organised enrolment is in spring and is based on your catchment area and other factors. See the Appendix for more information.
- **State-subsidised private school** (*escola concertada*). These schools are privately owned and run, and may be secular or non-secular. Tuition is subsidised by the government. The curriculum is also approved by the Catalan Ministry of Education and shares the state-organised enrolment process with the public schools.
- **Private school** (*escola privada*). While the curriculum (aims, content, teaching methods and assessment criteria, etc.) must be approved by the Catalan Ministry of Education, these schools do not receive government subsidies and the cost of schooling is covered in full by families.

In Barcelona, all public schools are owned by public bodies - either the Government of Catalonia or the Barcelona City Council - and they are run by the Barcelona Education Consortium.



CATALAN SCHOOL SYSTEM: SIMPLIFIED CHART

→ Conditional access → Access test required

Higher education

UNIVERSITY DEGREE
(*Estudis de grau*)

HIGHER VOCATIONAL TRAINING
(*Cicles formatius de grau superior*)

Upper secondary education

UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION
(*Batxillerat*)
16-18 years

VOCATIONAL TRAINING
(*Cicles formatius de grau mitjà*)

Secondary education (compulsory)

COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION
(*Educació secundària obligatòria, ESO*)
12-16 years

Primary education (compulsory)

UPPER
10-12 years

INTERMEDIATE
8-10 years

INITIAL
6-8 years

Preschool

SECOND CYCLE (*Parvularis*)
3-6 years

FIRST CYCLE (*Escola Bressol*)
0-3 years

Source: Compiled internally based on information from the Catalan Ministry of Education.

State-subsidised private schools (*escola concertada*) voluntarily participate in the government subsidy programme by complying with established requirements to receive subsidies from the Catalan government that cover the cost of basic educational needs. These schools do not charge tuition, but any other expenses beyond the scope of compulsory education are paid for by parents on a voluntary basis.



For more information:

Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona / Barcelona Education Consortium
edubcn.cat
(in Catalan)

Ajuntament de Barcelona / Barcelona City Council
lameva.barcelona.cat/en/living-in-bcn
see section Studying
barcelona.cat/educacio
(Spanish and Catalan only)

Generalitat de Catalunya - Educació i Formació / Government of Catalonia - Education and Training
web.gencat.cat/en/temes/educacio
(in English)

Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional / Spanish Ministry of Education
mecd.gob.es/educacion-mecd
(in Spanish)



▷ SCHOOL CALENDAR

The majority of schools in Catalonia follow a school year that runs from September to June and is divided into three terms:

- Autumn term runs from September to the Christmas holidays, which last approximately 15 days.
- Winter term begins after the Epiphany (6th January) and lasts until Easter holidays (March/April), which are approximately 10 days.
- Spring term starts after Easter and finishes towards the end of June.

Summer holidays last until the first or second week of September.

For Baccalaureate students taking university entrance exams (*Prova d'Accés a la Universitat - PAU*), the school year finishes in May, giving them approximately one month to prepare for exams.

▷ LOCAL SCHOOLS (*PÚBLICA AND CONCERTADA*)

All children living in Catalonia have the right to a place in the education system which guarantees them basic education free of charge.

Both public schools and State-subsidised private schools that belong to the Catalan Education Service follow the same curriculum because they are governed by the same legislation. However, each school may employ its own methodology and specific educational programme.

These schools follow the same enrolment and enrolment criteria and procedures.

Pre-registration is the procedure that must be completed to be admitted into a publicly funded school for the first time or when you want to change school. This application is usually submitted some months before the beginning of the school year, around March-April.

School places are distributed, first through a point system (taking into account proximity to the school, financial and family situation, etc.), then through a draw.

Before enrolling your child in any school, you must have the following essential information:


- School regulations, procedures and timetables.
- Number of places offered by the school.
- Criteria for admission of pupils.
- Territorial map of proximity (*Àrees territorials de proximitat*). This is an important prioritisation criterion for schools with limited places.
- Assignment between primary and secondary schools.
- The school's educational goals and methods.
- School services and after-school activities.

If the student arrives in Catalonia after the pre-registration period has ended or once the school year has begun, then an application for admission should still be made. In this case, you must find out if there are still vacancies at the school/s you have chosen in the level and year of education you require.


To consult your territorial map of proximity, go to:

 **Centres i serveis educatius > Àrees territorials de proximitat** at edubcn.cat (Catalan only)

For additional information on the pre-registration process in the public and concertada education system, visit:

 **Estudiar a Catalunya > Preinscripció** where you will also find information in other languages:
gencat.cat/ensenyament

To look for schools (primary and secondary schools, *Batxillerat* and *Formació Professional*), go to:

 **Consulta de centres** page on barcelona.cat/educacio (Spanish and Catalan only)

or

 edubcn.cat
(Catalan only)

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

An international school is one that uses a curriculum or language of instruction different from that of the local community. In Barcelona and its metropolitan area, there are over 40 international schools.

There are some characteristics that differentiate international schools:

- **Local curriculum, foreign language:** many schools follow the local curriculum, school calendar and holidays but use a foreign language of instruction, either in whole or in part.
- **Foreign curriculum, foreign language:** the schools that teach a foreign curriculum also use a foreign language of instruction. Some schools are sponsored by foreign governments and give preference to citizens of that country or students who have previously studied in that country, but are open to all. Other schools are not associated with any government, but simply follow the curriculum of a different country and have been certified by the appropriate body. Other schools have negotiated agreements with local governments to offer students double certificates upon graduation.

The great majority are purely private, which can be an expensive option, compared with public schools, which are paid for in full with public funds.

The international schools in the city of Barcelona are located mostly in the Sarrià-Sant Gervasi and Les Corts districts. There are also quite a few international schools in the surrounding metropolitan area with significant expat communities in cities such as Sant Cugat, Sitges and La Garriga, to name a few.

The Barcelona City Council puts out a guide specifically on schooling with more detailed information, which you can find online at:

 meet.barcelona.cat/en/doing-business/setting-up-in-barcelona



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN BARCELONA AREA

School	City	Web
Àgora International School Barcelona	Sant Esteve Sesrovires	agoraisbarcelona.edu.es
Àgora Sant Cugat International School	Sant Cugat del Vallès	agorasantcugat.edu.es
American School of Barcelona	Esplugues de Llobregat	asbarcelona.com
Aula Escola Europea	Barcelona	aula-ee.com
Benjamin Franklin International School	Barcelona	bfschool.org
Colegio Hatikva	Valldoreix (Sant Cugat)	colegiohatikva.com
Colegio Japonés de Barcelona	Sant Cugat del Vallès	colegiojaponesbcn.org
Col·legi John Talabot	Barcelona	johtalabot.com
Col·legi Mary Ward	Barcelona	marywardbarcelona.net
Col·legi Montserrat	Barcelona	cmontserrat.org
Col·legi Xaloc	L'Hospitalet de Llobregat	xaloc.org
Deutsche Schule Barcelona (DSB)	Esplugues de Llobregat	dsbarcelona.com
École Française Ferdinand de Lesseps	Barcelona	lesseps.net
English Academy Santa Claus	Barcelona	academyantaclaus.com
English School of Barcelona	Barcelona	colegioingles.net
ES International School	El Prat de Llobregat	es-school.com
Europa International School	Sant Cugat del Vallès	europais.com
GRESOL International School	Terrassa	gresol.net
Hamelin-Laie International School	Montgat	hamelinlaie.com
Highlands School Barcelona	Esplugues de Llobregat	highlandsbarcelona.es
Institut Moisès Broggi	Barcelona	institutbroggi.org
Kensington School	Barcelona	kensingtonschoolbcn.com
La Salle Bonanova	Barcelona	bonanova.lasalle.cat
Lycée Français Bel Air	Sant Pere de Ribes	ecole-belair.com
Lycée Français de Barcelone	Barcelona	lfb.es
Lycée Français de Gavà Bon Soleil	Gavà	bonsoleil.es
Oak House School	Barcelona	oakhouseschool.com
Princess Margaret School	Barcelona	princessmargaret.org
Richmond International School	Sant Pere de Ribes	richmondinternationalschool.com
Salesians Sarrià	Barcelona	salesianssarria.com
Santa Clara International School	Barcelona	santaclaraic.com
Schweizerschule Barcelona	Barcelona	escuelasuizabcn.es
Scuola Italiana di Barcellona	Barcelona	scuolaitalianabarcellona.com
SEK Catalunya International School	La Garriga	sekatalunya.es
St George's School	Barcelona	stgeorge.es
St Paul's School	Barcelona	stpauls.es
St Peter's School	Barcelona	stpeters.es
The British College of Gavà	Gavà	britishcollegegava.com
The British School of Barcelona	Castelldefels / Sitges	britishschoolbarcelona.com
The International School of Catalunya	La Garriga	iscat.es
The Olive Tree School	Sant Pere de Ribes	olivetreeschool.org
Zürich Schule	Barcelona	zurichschule.com

► HIGHER EDUCATION


Catalonia is one of the founding regions of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) which was created to ensure more comparable, compatible and consistent systems of higher education in Europe. All degrees are regulated by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which guarantees not only the harmonization and quality of the courses, but student mobility as well.

The local university system provides training of the highest quality, using academic syllabi with a clear international focus that include degrees taught in collaboration with other universities.

The current structure of university degree courses sets three cycles leading to the obtaining of official university bachelor's (*Grau*), master's (*Màster*) and doctoral degrees (*Doctorat*).

Barcelona has world-class universities and higher-education institutions, both public and private. They are known for excellent academic programmes and cutting-edge research in a wide range of fields.

The following are the five state universities in the Barcelona area.

 **Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)**
Bellaterra / Cerdanyola del Vallès
uab.es/english

 **Universitat de Barcelona (UB)**
Barcelona
ub.edu/en

 **Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)**
Barcelona
uoc.edu/portal/english

 **Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) (Barcelona Tech)**
Barcelona
upc.edu/en

 **Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF)**
Barcelona
upf.edu/barcelona

There are also four private universities in Barcelona:

 **Universitat Abat Oliva - CEU**
Barcelona
uaocceu.es

 **Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC)**
Barcelona
uic.es

 **Universitat Ramon Llull (URL)**
Barcelona
url.edu

 **Universitat de Vic - Universitat Central de Catalunya (UVic)**
Vic / Barcelona
uvic.cat

Barcelona is also a focal point for research. The reasons to explain why are: a home-grown research-centre model in Catalonia, policies for attracting and retain researchers of recognised prestige based exclusively on scientific and academic merit, large-scale research infrastructures and a wide political and institutional consensus that brings stability to the system.

Among the large research infrastructures, the two main ones are the CELLS Consortium's Alba Synchrotron Light Facility and the Mare Nostrum supercomputer of the Barcelona Supercomputing Center. Both of them are recognised as Unique Scientific and Technical Facilities (ICTS).

In Catalonia, there are 25,000 researchers, a high percentage of whom are foreign nationals, and 42 research centres associated with the Government of Catalonia through the CERCA Institute (cerca.cat), while 21 other research centres are affiliated with the Spanish National Research Council (csic.es).

▷ SUPPORT SERVICES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS



For more broad information on higher education and research in Catalonia, visit studyincatalonia.gencat.cat/en



Barcelona Centre Universitari (BCU)

It is the official accommodation service of the universities and research centres of Barcelona. BCU takes care of the needs of students, teachers and researchers so they can enjoy and optimize their stay in Barcelona and its metropolitan area. Helping them in choosing the accommodation that best suits their needs. It offers personalized attention in different languages. BCU also promotes the area of Barcelona as a university and international scientific centre.

bcu.cat



For study and research grants, visit **Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca** (Agency for management of University and Research Grants) agaur.gencat.cat



The **University Qualification Recognition Mentoring Service (SARU)**, run by the Catalan Government, advises people on the process of getting their qualifications from foreign universities recognised. For more information, visit: treballiaferssocials.gencat.cat/ca/ambits_tematics/immigracio/saru

▷ BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Barcelona has become an internationally recognised centre for business schools, boasting two of the top-ranked international schools in the world, as well as dozens of well-regarded business schools from all over the world.



ESADE

Barcelona
esade.edu/web/eng



IESE

Barcelona
iese.edu/en

▷ LANGUAGE SCHOOLS AND FOREIGN CULTURAL CENTRES

The *Consorci per la Normalització Lingüística* (CPNL) offers free introductory courses in Catalan. Higher levels are subsidised and very affordable.



Visit cpnl.cat for more information



There are classroom and online/blended Catalan courses available at the **parla.cat** platform.

Official Language Schools (*Escola Oficial d'Idiomes*) offer courses in Catalan, Spanish and many other foreign languages. There is a network of six Official Language Schools in Barcelona. The following two are the ones with a wider offer of language courses:

 **Escola Oficial d'Idiomes Barcelona - Drassanes**
eoibd.cat

 **Escola Oficial d'Idiomes Barcelona - Vall d'Hebron**
eoibcnvh.cat

Catalan universities and cultural institutions of different countries also offer language courses. In addition, there is a thriving business of private language schools throughout the city.

 **British Council**
britishcouncil.org/spain

 **Institut d'Estudis Nord-Americans (North American Institute)**
ien.es

 **Institut Français Barcelone**
ifbcn.cat

 **Goethe Institut**
goethe.de/ins/es/bar/esindex.htm

 **Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Barcellona**
iicbarcellona.esteri.it/IIC_Barcellona

 **Casa de Rusia en Barcelona**
casarusiabarcelona.com

 **Centro Cultural do Brasil em Barcelona**
cbrasilbarcelona.org

 **Casa Asia**
casaasia.es





Maremagnum in Port Vell



Public transport

Barcelona has an extensive, high quality public transport network available to all. Hundreds of vehicles and trains move both above ground -buses, trams and taxis- and underground -trains and metros- forming a network connecting all neighbourhoods, districts and nearby towns, with more than 3,000 stops and stations.



▷ INTEGRATED FARE SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

One of the main advantages of this network is that all the modes of collective public transport are integrated into a metropolitan fares system. This means that by paying once at the start of the journey, passengers can combine up to four modes of transport in the network in a single journey, an initiative that improves comfort and favours its use.

Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) offers a wide range of travel cards to suit different needs. There are single tickets, transferable travel cards valid for 10 journeys and personal travel cards valid for one, 30 and 90 days. There are also tourist travel cards and special travel cards for students, families and seniors.

Transport fares also vary by zone. The further out from the city centre you go, the more expensive the fare. Tickets and travel cards can be purchased at metro ticket booths and vending machines.



For more information, visit the Tickets and fares section at tmb.cat and atm.cat/web/en/integrated-tickets.php



Here you will find a map of the globally integrated railway network. atm.cat/web/en/railwaynetwork.php

▷ BUYING A TICKET

Tickets can be purchased at metro, tram, Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya and Rodalies de Catalunya train stations, at inter-urban bus stations, at the customer service offices of integrated transport companies, at ServiCaixa terminals, at tobacconists and lottery stalls, at newsagent stalls and other associated establishments.

▷ BUSES

Day buses

Barcelona has a network of bus lines that provide transport links throughout the Barcelona metropolitan area. It has one of the cleanest above ground public transport footprints in Europe, thanks to its effort to introduce technologies such hybrid or full electric vehicles or filters and other advanced equipment.

Each line has its own timetable, but buses generally run from 6.30 a.m. until 11.00 p.m.

You can look at the information panels on bus stops to check the route and timetable, and in some cases waiting times due to the progressive introduction of dynamic information screens at stops and inside buses.

Double check for special public holiday schedules. The bus network is integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system.

Barcelona is implementing a new system for organising its bus services to have a more intelligible network with shorter waiting and journey times and improved links between modes of transport. Upon completion of the final phase, the Barcelona bus network will comprise 97 lines: 43 urban and inter-city lines, 26 neighbourhood buses (*Bus de Barri*) and 28 high performance lines. Those high performance lines will be: 17 vertical or sea-mountain (V lines), 8 horizontal or Llobregat-Besòs (H lines) and 3 diagonal (D lines).



For route maps, timetables and other information, visit tmb.cat

Night buses

Barcelona is served by a network of night buses called *Nitbus* at night and in the small hours of the morning. These buses have their own routes, all of which stop at Plaça Catalunya. Night buses are integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system.



For night bus route maps, timetables and other information, visit the Nitbus section at ambmobilitat.cat

RAIL

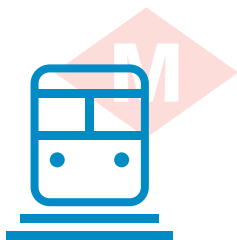
Metro and FGC

The Barcelona metro system is the easiest and fastest way to get around. The city's underground trains are clean, efficient and comfortable.

The metro network currently has 11 lines. It is jointly run by TMB and the *Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya* (FGC). TMB operates Metro lines 1 to 5 and 9 to 11 while the FGC operates FGC lines 6 to 8. The FGC system has lines within Barcelona and others that go to nearby towns and cities, such as Manresa, Terrassa, Sant Cugat and Sabadell.



For route maps, timetables and other information, visit tmb.cat and fgc.cat



Local and long-distance rail

RENFE, Spain's national train operator, operates both local and long-distance train links.

Local trains, known as Rodalies RENFE, run all across Catalonia. Some destinations are integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system and thus accept normal travel cards. Tickets can be bought at the stations' ticket booths or ticket machines.

RENFE also operates train links to other parts of Spain, notably the AVE high-speed trains to Madrid and other Spanish cities.

Estació de Sants is the main rail hub of Barcelona, with services to the rest of Spain including the AVE. Suburban, regional and French-border trains also use this station.

International trains, as well as most regional rail lines with service to the rest of Catalonia, depart from **Estació de França**.



For more information on RENFE services and to buy tickets online, visit renfe.es



You can also get information and reserve tickets by calling
Tel: +34 912 32 03 20

Tram

Barcelona has two tram lines: Trambaix, which connects the Baix Llobregat area to Barcelona, and Trambesòs, which links Sant Adrià de Besòs and Badalona to Barcelona. The system is integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system.



For more information, visit tram.cat



Funicular

TMB operates the Montjuïc funicular railway, which takes passengers from the Paral·lel metro station to the top of Montjuïc, where popular attractions such as the Olympic Stadium, Palau Sant Jordi and the Miró Foundation are located.

This funicular is integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system.



For more information, visit tmb.cat

TAXI

Taxis in Barcelona are yellow and black and show a green light when free. Fares are charged per kilometre.

Extra fees are charged for every piece of luggage stored in the boot and for trips to and from the airport, cruise-ship terminal and *Fira Barcelona* (The Barcelona Trade Fair location). Taxi fares also vary depending on time of day and are higher on public holidays.

Fares are displayed on the taximeter, the use of which is obligatory. At the end of the

trip, the driver will press a button that will automatically add up all charges and show the total fare. You can pay by credit card or cash.

Taxis do not accept reservations except to go to the airport, but you can phone to book one a few minutes ahead.



For more information, visit taxi.amb.cat

BICING: PUBLIC SHARING BICYCLE SYSTEM

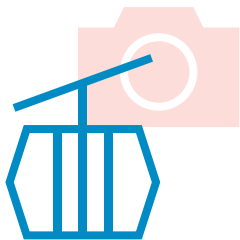
Barcelona is a bicycle-friendly city with numerous bicycle paths. Bicing is urban transport based on shared use of bicycles and is part of its public transport system. Residents with a yearly membership simply swipe their user cards at a service station to unlock and use a bicycle.

Bicing has continuously grown in number of stations and users since being launched in 2007. It is spread throughout the city and currently includes 465 stations. Electrical bikes are available in over 45 of these stations. Bicing stations are located near metro stations and bus stops, since the Bicing system is designed to complement other means of public transportation. For this reason, Bicing bicycles can only be used for a maximum of 2 hours per ride. The first 30 minutes are free, as they are included in your annual membership fee. After those first 30 minutes, you will have to pay an additional fee for every 30 minutes extra (up to the maximum of 2 hours).

Note that Bicing is part of the city's public transport system and is not for tourists or temporary visitors. The programme is available to residents over 16 years of age. There are, however, private bike-hire companies that offer similar services to visitors.



For more information, visit bicing.cat
You can also download the free Bicing app for iOS or Android



▶ TOURIST AND LEISURE TRANSPORT

TMB operates the Bus Turistic, a hop-on, hop-off tourist bus service with stops all over the city. Tickets can be bought on-board. Private companies also offer a similar service.

TMB's Montjuïc Cable Car (*Telefèric de Montjuïc*) runs between Port Vell and Montjuïc and lets passengers enjoy fantastic views of Barcelona. TMB also runs the *Tramvia Blau*, an old-fashioned tram that connects Plaça Kennedy on Avinguda Tibidabo to the Tibidabo funicular railway station.



For more information about leisure transport operated by TMB, visit tmb.cat

In addition to the Montjuïc funicular integrated into Barcelona's single-fare system, another funicular railway runs to the top of Tibidabo hill, which has an amusement park with spectacular views of the city.



For more information, visit tibidabo.cat

▶ AIRPORTS

Barcelona International Airport

Barcelona International Airport (IATA: BCN, ICAO: LEBL), also known as El Prat, is a major transport hub where more than 100 airlines operate. It handles domestic and international flights. Most international and domestic airlines as well as low-cost carriers operate from this airport.

The airport has two terminals, T1 and T2. Both terminals are linked by a free shuttle bus that runs every six or eight minutes, with a travel time of 10 minutes between them.



For more information, visit aena.es

The airport is about 15 kilometres away from the city centre. Public transport options to and from the airport include rail, metro and bus. The rail service from the airport is on the RENFE R-2 Nord: Aeroport Maçanet-Massanes suburban train line which leaves every half hour and calls at Sants Estació (19 minutes), Passeig de Gràcia (26 minutes) and El Clot (30 minutes) in the city centre. The train stops at T2, from where you can take the free shuttle bus to T1. Ticket vending machines are available at the airport station.

The Aerobús stops at T1 and T2 and travels along Gran Via to Plaça Catalunya with a minimum travel time of 35 minutes. The service operates from 6.00 a.m. to 1.00 a.m. Buses run about every 5-10 minutes.



For more information, visit aerobusbcn.com

The recently inaugurated L9 metro line leaves every 7 minutes and takes 32 minutes from Zona Universitaria metro stop, having a stop at both T1 and T2.

Between 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., you can catch a night bus service (Nit Bus N17) from Plaça Catalunya to the airport. It runs every 20 minutes and the minimum travel time is 40 minutes. Bus 46 also runs from both terminals to Plaça Espanya. Travel time is about one hour.

Taxis are widely available outside the terminals. There is an additional airport fee and a charge for each piece of luggage placed in the boot. Private airport transfers can also be arranged for groups.

Girona Airport

Girona Airport, nearly 100 kilometres to the north, handles domestic and international flights by low-cost airlines, notably Ryanair.



For more information, visit aena.es

The Barcelona bus service, run by Sagalés, offers a shuttle-bus transfer service between Estació del Nord in Barcelona and Girona Airport. Bus departure times are arranged in accordance with the arrival and departure times of Ryanair flights. The trip takes around one hour and ten minutes.



For more information and bus timetables, visit sagales.com

Girona Airport is also directly connected to Barcelona by the AP7 motorway. Driving time is approximately one hour.

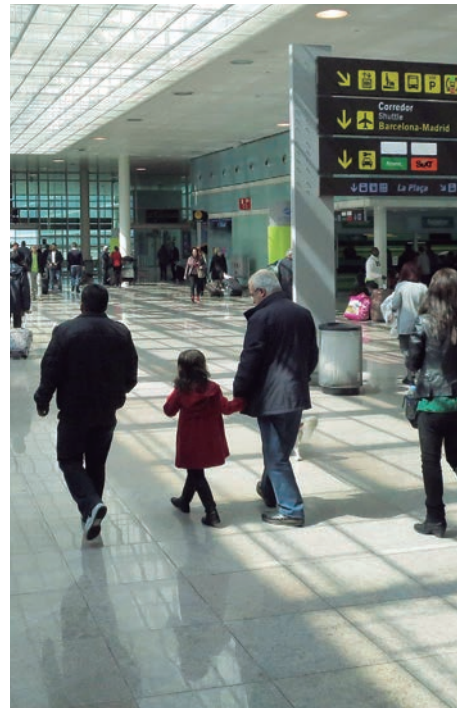
Reus Airport

Reus Airport, around 100 kilometres to the south of Barcelona, is also used by low-cost carriers. Hispano Igualadina operates a shuttle bus service between Estació de Sants in Barcelona and Reus Airport. You can buy tickets in the ticket office in the arrivals terminal or from the bus driver. The journey time is approximately one hour and a half.



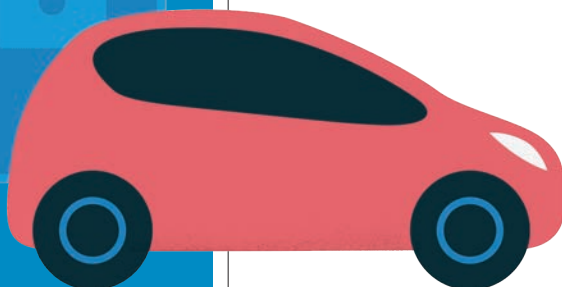
For more information and bus timetables, visit igualadina.com

Alternatively, you can take the train from Barcelona Sants station to Reus and then take a local bus to the airport. The trip also takes about an hour and a half. Reus Airport is also directly connected to Barcelona by the AP7 motorway. Driving time is approximately one hour.



9

Private transport



▶ RULES OF THE ROAD

In Spain, as well as in the rest of continental Europe, you drive on the right. The maximum speed within cities is usually 50 km/h but you should follow the speed limit signs posted. On country roads and motorways, the speed limit is generally 90 km/h and 120 km/h, respectively.

It is compulsory for every person in the car to wear a seatbelt. Children smaller than 135 cm must be strapped into a legal child seat, and children under 12 are not allowed in the front seat regardless of height or weight. Smoking, eating and using a mobile phone while driving are all prohibited. The legal blood alcohol level is 0.05 percent for most drivers, whereas for those drivers who have had their licence for less than 2 years, the limit is 0.03 percent.

▷ SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY POLICIES

Cars and motorbikes are a big part of vehicle traffic in Barcelona. But, the rise of the sustainability culture, saving and healthy habits have been decisive in persuading people to change this situation, year after year. The City Council encourages safe, sustainable, equitable and efficient travel by bicycle, public transport and on foot.

In fact, Barcelona's mobility is quite sustainable, as 56% of all inner city journeys are made walking and cycling, 30% by public transport and only 14% by private transport.

Without detriment to the use of cars where necessary, there are different strategies designed to achieve quieter and healthier forms of mobility, such as the increasing pedestrian zones and areas of circulation at a maximum speed of 30 kilometres per hour, introducing the super blocks, etc.

Another new measure is the creation of a low-emission zone in Barcelona's ring-road area, which includes Barcelona and other municipalities in the metropolitan area. It is planned to progressively restrict the circulation of the most polluting vehicles within this area, from December 2017 onwards.



To learn more about mobility policies in Barcelona, visit barcelona.cat/mobilitat

▷ BICYCLES

Barcelona is committed to the use of bicycles as a regular means of urban transport and encourage cycling in the city by expanding and improving infrastructures, and by adopting measures that will ensure safer travel and minimise conflicts with other road users.

Thanks to the implementation of this bike friendly scheme, cyclists can currently take advantage of nearly 130 km of bicycle paths, and that number is forecast to grow up to 308 km in 2019.

Bikes must have a bell and at night it is mandatory to have a white headlight and a red rear light, as well as reflectors. While strongly recommended, helmets are not mandatory for adults, but they are for children.



For more information, visit barcelona.cat/bicicleta

▷ ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Barcelona is at the European forefront providing adequate infrastructures for electric vehicles, through LIVE (Logistics for the Implementation of the Electric Vehicle). This is a public-private platform of entities involved in sustainable mobility.

Among other incentives, there is a free of charge card for electric vehicle owners that enables the free use of a network of more than 500 charging points in Barcelona, reduced parking costs in regulated areas, free access to toll roads and exemption from vehicle registration tax.



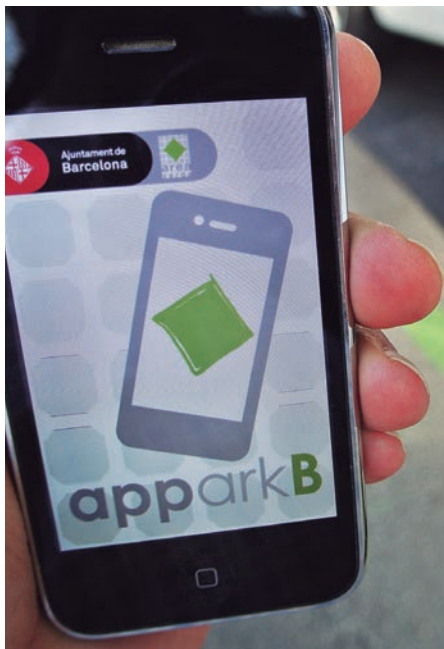
For further information, go to livebarcelona.cat/en

▶ VEHICLE HIRING AND SHARING

Several local and international car-rental companies offer their services in Barcelona, with competitive rates and a number of pickup and drop-off points throughout the city. Cars can also be reserved online through the companies' respective websites. Car sharing allows its members to enjoy the benefits of using a car without the hassles of owning one. It is a convenient, economical option for people who do not need a car every day.

Members pay a yearly membership fee and use their user cards to access car-sharing vehicles parked in different underground parking lots throughout the city. Vehicles need to be reserved online at least an hour in advance. Users are charged hourly and per kilometre travelled.

There are different motosharing platforms that offer electric scooters throughout the city. You can book, access and pay for your drive using a mobile app.



▶ PURCHASING A CAR

When looking for a car, you can find new and used cars at a dealership where much of the paperwork will be done for you and you can get a loan for the purchase price. You will need a Foreign Identity Number (NIE) or passport, a copy of your house deed or rental contract (of at least 12 months), and three payslips if you are financing the purchase.

Second hand cars can be found on specialised Internet sites, and while cheaper, there is more paperwork to be filled out and taken to the Traffic Department where you register the name change of the vehicle.

Recent legislation prohibits cars that are over 20 years old from circulating in Barcelona. Besides, you should take into consideration the type of fuel and the age of the vehicle, because polluting cars will have some restrictions to circulate in the metropolitan area of Barcelona due to a new regulation. In order to have cleaner air, this regulation will be implemented gradually, in different phases.

Insurance is always obligatory and should be carried in the car, and although you do not need a valid driving licence to purchase a vehicle in Spain, you will need it to drive legally.

▶ SCOOTERS AND MOTORBIKES

Scooters and motorbikes are a very popular means of transportation in temperate Barcelona, as they allow you to get around the city easily and beat the traffic at rush hour. Since scooters are easy to park and cheap to maintain and insure, scooters are a preferred transport option for Barcelona residents. Helmets are obligatory.

If you have already had a European driving licence for more than 3 years, you will be allowed to ride a scooter of up to 125CC; otherwise, the maximum would be 49CC without a specific motorcycle licence.

▷ **ITV – INSPECCIÓ TÈCNICA DE VEHICLES**

All vehicles over four years old must pass a periodic inspection (ITV), based on their registration date. The date of the next inspection is put on a sticker on the front windscreen and owners are responsible for getting a timely appointment at one of the ITV garages or face a fine.

▷ **CAR PARKS AND THE GREEN AREA**

The municipal company BSM is responsible for regulating underground parking in the city, as well as building and managing municipal parking facilities. It offers both pay-by-minute parking for short stays and different types of payment options for regular, long-term use.



For more information, visit aparcamentsbsm.cat

Apart from municipal facilities, Barcelona also has private parking garages that charge from €12 to €25 a day according to the zone. The parking rates depend on the location of the car park and if it is in the open air or underground.

To find public and private car parks, you can download the following apps for iOS or Android: *ApparkB*, *AreaDUM* and *A prop d'aquí* at the website: barcelona.cat/apps

As an additional option to underground parking, the city of Barcelona also regulates street parking to improve traffic flow, decrease noise and air emissions and make better use of public spaces. This system, known as the Green Area (*Àrea Verda*), establishes different parking zones depending on each area of the city with different tariffs.

This system of regulation has the effect of discouraging travel to the regulated zone, thus reducing stresses on the transit system. The regulations are only in force during the day, meaning that the deterrent effect only occurs during the daytime. It is not needed during evenings and on public holidays.

There are different kinds of parking spaces within the Green Area: blue, green, residents-only green, loading and unloading, motorcycles, coaches and others (reserved spaces etc.). Blue zone parking spaces are there to encourage a high rate of vehicle rotation around tertiary services such as shopping centres, hospitals, schools etc. The goal here is to provide parking for the maximum number of people visiting the area. All types of vehicles can park in these zones using the corresponding time ticket issued by the parking meter. The maximum parking time will be shown on the sign.

The goal of green spaces is to prioritise parking for vehicles belonging to residents of the zone over vehicles coming in from outside. However, all vehicles may park in these zones. Vehicles belonging to authorised residents living in the zone must be identified when parking using the corresponding obligatory time ticket (for one day, one week or three months). The ticket shows the resident's zone and the licence number of the parked vehicle, and it also identifies the vehicle as being authorised. Vehicles that do not belong to residents of the parking zone may also be parked there during regulated hours as long as the obligatory time ticket is clearly displayed. Vehicles can be parked for the maximum time shown on the sign, which will be either 1 or 2 hours. Vehicles belonging both to residents and non-residents may be parked without restriction outside of the operating hours shown on the vertical sign.

To be eligible for the special parking within the Green Area, your residence and your vehicle must be registered with the City Council.



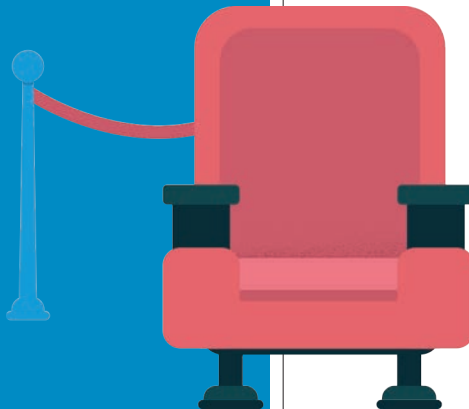
For more information, visit areaaverda.cat

10

Culture and cultural life

▷ CATALAN CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

Catalan society has a long tradition of autonomy and cultural uniqueness. The Catalan people are known for their motivation and commitment to work, values rooted in a strong mercantile tradition. Barcelona is a multilingual city with two official languages: Catalan and Spanish. Here, as in the rest of Catalonia, Spanish shares co-official status with Catalan, the language of Catalonia.



The Catalan language is a cherished, indispensable part of Catalan identity and culture, and it will surely play an important role in your everyday life in Barcelona. Most locals, especially those living in urban areas such as Barcelona, can be considered balanced bilinguals. This means that they can switch between Catalan and Spanish with little to no effort. In addition, a part of Barcelona's population is composed of immigrants or descendants of immigrants from other parts of Spain who consider Spanish their mother tongue and home language. Spanish is widely used in Barcelona, in the home, in the street and in the media, and if you speak the language you can communicate with the locals as soon as you arrive.

The importance of the Catalan language in all areas of Catalan life is undeniable. A large number of Catalan families exclusively speak Catalan in the home and consider it their language of identity. Catalan is the language of instruction in schools in Catalonia, where Spanish and a foreign language, usually English, are also taught. In the region's universities, although teaching is conducted in both Spanish and Catalan, the latter is adopted as the institutional language and is thus used in administrative affairs. Local government bodies and institutions also conduct business in Catalan.

For anyone planning to live in Barcelona, learning Catalan is highly recommended. In Barcelona and the rest of Catalonia, commercial signage is mostly in Catalan, and street, town and city names are always in this language.

The good news is that Catalan, like Spanish, is a Romance language. Given the close proximity between these related languages, if you speak Spanish (or French or Italian or any other language in the family), you are already one step ahead in learning Catalan. Apart from this, the Catalan government and many of its universities and institutions offer free introductory courses as well as internet learning resources.

When you get to Barcelona or even before you arrive, there are a number of ways for you to learn Catalan.

The presence of a regional language is just another feature that makes the cultural tapestry of Barcelona richer and more colourful. Knowledge of Catalan, though by no means required, will make your integration into Catalan society easier. It can also open new doors in your professional, business, social and personal life, enrich your living experience in Barcelona, and enable you to enjoy a rich, diverse cultural and leisure offering that reflects the city's two-thousand-year old history.



For more information on the Catalan language and Catalan language policy, visit intercat.cat/lingcat (available in English) and llengua.gencat.cat/en



For free Catalan courses in Barcelona, go to *Consortori per la Normalització Lingüística* at cpnl.cat/bcn.acolliment or do it online at parla.cat

▷ FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS

Some Catalan traditions have become popular beyond our borders. Many people from all over the world have already heard about *sardanes* (a traditional dance), *castellers* (also known internationally as human towers) and even *pa amb tomàquet* (bread rubbed with fresh tomato, generally served as a side dish or with cold cuts). These are just a few of the popular icons related to Catalan culture but it is easy to discover other Catalan traditions thanks to the great amount of popular festivals that are celebrated in the streets, especially in spring and summer.

Food is a key element in any Catalan celebration. Don't miss the opportunity to try some of the delicious pastries and traditional dishes that are elaborated on special dates. These are some of the most important celebrations in Catalonia:



Diada de Sant Jordi

St George, locally known as Sant Jordi, is the patron saint of Catalonia. Catalans celebrate his feast day on 23 April by exchanging books and roses. On this day, Barcelona's main shopping streets are filled with book and rose stalls decorated with the Catalan colours of red and yellow.

On *La Diada de Sant Jordi*, men and women traditionally give each other a book (for him) and a red rose (for her) although some modern couples might get both. For this reason, many Catalans consider Sant Jordi to be their Saint Valentine's Day, which isn't celebrated much. Despite the importance of this day all over Catalonia, it is not a public holiday, though one of the most beautiful days to stroll through the city. It is a day of culture and friendship.

Revetlla de Sant Joan

On 23 June, the eve of the Feast Day of St John or Midsummer's Eve, Catalans celebrate the summer solstice with bonfires, fireworks, *cava* (the Catalan sparkling wine par excellence) and a traditional pastry called *coca de Sant Joan*.

La Diada

This public holiday commemorates the fall of Barcelona to the Bourbon troops during the War of the Spanish Succession on 11 September 1714 after a siege lasting 14 months. The Catalan Parliament declared 11 September to be a Catalan national holiday, and on that day events are organised in the streets and the Catalans display flags on their balconies.

La Mercè Festival

Locals celebrate the feast day of Barcelona's patroness on 24 September with a large street party. Highlights include the *correfoc* or fire run, featuring costumed devils and fire-breathing dragons, and the fireworks display near the Montjuïc fountain. The city council offers a good selection of free activities to celebrate La Mercè, including a series of music concerts in the open air. During La Mercè, you can also enjoy the indie music festival BAM (*Barcelona Acció Musical*).

Christmas traditions and New Year's Eve

For Christmas season, many streets in Barcelona light up and there are different markets, being the Santa Llúcia Fair the main one offering everything that is essential to decorate the home.

Christmas Eve is the day of small gifts for children from one of the most beloved Catalan Christmas characters: the *Tiò de Nadal*. It is a magic log that children have to start feeding in the previous weeks. After eating so much, the *Tiò* poos presents and sweets, after kids beat him with a stick while singing a song.

On Christmas Day (25 December), it is usual to get together with your family and loved ones to enjoy a lavish meal, which normally includes *escudella i carn d'olla* (a rich soup and poached meats) and the typical sweets: *turrons* and *neules*.

The Feast Day of St. Stephen or Boxing Day (*Sant Esteve*) on 26 December is celebrated

only in Catalonia. It is another day for getting together with relatives, especially those you didn't spend Christmas Day with. The tradition is to eat *canelons* (cannelloni) made with the leftovers of Christmas lunch.

Every 28 December the day of the Innocents is celebrated, in which the jokes can surprise you at every step. The traditional joke is to stick a picture of the silhouette of a person onto people's backs in the hopes that they will not notice. The television and newspapers also take part in the fun.

People in Barcelona usually celebrate New Year's Eve or *Cap d'any* by going out and partying. At midnight, they wait for the twelve strokes that mark the beginning of the New Year. They eat one grape at each stroke to bring luck for every month of the year.

The most athletic close the year running in the *Nassos Race* through the streets of Barcelona and inaugurate the new year with a good swim in the Mediterranean.

On the night of 5 January (*Nit dels Reis*), before the Epiphany, most towns and cities hold a procession in honour of the Three Kings or Three Wise Men. In Barcelona, the Three Kings, Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar, arrive by boat at the harbour and are formally welcomed by the mayor. They parade throughout the city centre of Barcelona in a magnificent, five-kilometre procession called the *Cavalcada*. The Three Kings distribute sweets and presents to both young and old, accompanied by costumed characters and dancers with their elaborate floats and carriages.



For more information, visit barcelona.cat/nadal (only active during Christmas season)

▷ CATALAN CUISINE

Most foreign visitors fall in love with Catalan cuisine, but what is so special about it? The key is probably in its locally produced seasonal ingredients, which make the dishes taste savoury and fresh. Catalan gastronomy is a reflection of the Mediterranean diet, where meat, fish, seafood, vegetables, legumes and fruit are the great protagonists of traditional recipes that will make your mouth water.

Without a doubt, there is nothing more Catalan than *pa amb tomàquet*, the tomato-smothered bread fundamental to so many meals, as it can be accompanied with all kinds of sausages and cheese, and be eaten at any hour of the day.

Also typically Catalan dishes are: *escalivada* (peppers, aubergines and onions baked in oven), *esqueixada* (a cold salad with shredded salt cod), *calçots* (char-grilled green onions), *escudella i carn d'olla* (a soup of pasta followed by a dish of the meat and vegetables used to make the soup), *mar i muntanya* (a dish combining ingredients from the mountains, generally meat, with ingredients from the sea, generally fish and seafood) or *suquet de peix* (a potato-based seafood stew). *Crema catalana* (the traditional custard) is the most typical Catalan dessert.

These dishes can be accompanied by the excellent wines that are produced in different wine regions in Catalonia, such as *Penedès* or *Priorat* among a total of 11 Quality Designations of Origin. Catalan people also celebrate important occasions with a glass of *cava*, a sparkling white wine, similar to what the French call 'champagne'.

The Catalans give much importance to their food, with many of its cooks receiving international acclaim, Ferran Adrià and the Roca brothers being a few of them.

▷ MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL CENTRES

Art enthusiasts will have plenty to admire in Barcelona's museums, cultural centres and art galleries. The city's extensive art and heritage collections cover a broad range of styles and periods.

The museums in Barcelona stay open all year long. Most museums are open during the weekend but close some other day in the week, usually Mondays. Some museums offer free entrance on the first Sunday of every month, and most of them are free every Sunday from 3.00 p.m. to closing time.

Barcelona participates in the "Museums at Night" event that takes place all over Europe annually, where citizens can enjoy a special evening visiting some of the city's most renowned museums.

📍 **CaixaForum**

A private cultural centre that features changing exhibitions of art and photography.
obrasocial.lacaixa.es

📍 **Castell de Montjuïc**

Thanks to the privileged location of the Castle, on top of Montjuïc hill, visitors can enjoy superb views of Barcelona and its surroundings.
barcelona.cat/castelldemontjuic

📍 **Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB)**

Originally a centre of urban development and urban culture studies, the CCCB has evolved into a unique museum of eclectic subjects ranging from photography to sculpture and audiovisual art.
cccb.org/en

📍 **Cosmocaixa**

Barcelona's science museum with many interesting exhibits and hands-on activities for children and adults.
cosmocaixa.com



La Pedrera

📍 **El Born Centre de Cultura i Memòria**

Born CCM is a space created for the city to encourage and promote the remembrance of local and national events, as well as those affecting communities around the world.
barcelona.cat/elbornculturaimeoria

📍 **Fabra i Coats – Centre d'Art Contemporani**

The Fabra i Coats Contemporary Art Centre of Barcelona is dedicated to the research, production, exhibition and dissemination of contemporary artistic practices.
barcelona.cat/centredart

📍 **Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera (Sala d'Exposicions de La Pedrera)**

This foundation sponsors various art exhibits throughout the year which are held at Gaudi's La Pedrera building on Passeig de Gràcia.
lapedrera.com

📍 **Fundació Antoni Tàpies**

This museum displays artist Antoni Tàpies' collection of modern and contemporary art.
fundaciotapies.org

📍 **Fundació Joan Miró**

This museum on Montjuïc hill houses the most important collection of this Catalan artist's work.
fmirobcn.org/en



La Capella

La Capella is the space used by Barcelona's Institut de Cultura to showcase the work of emerging artists.
lacapella.barcelona



La Virreina Centre de la Imatge

This gallery hosts itinerary art exhibits
barcelona.cat/lavirreina



Museu de Cultures del món

It shows the artistic and cultural diversity of different cultures from Africa, Asia, America and Oceania.
museuculturesmon.bcn.cat



Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya

This museum takes visitors on an archaeological journey from prehistory to the 6th century AD.
mac.cat



Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)

This museum is dedicated to the various art movements of the second half of the 20th century.
machba.cat



Museu del Disseny de Barcelona

This museum hosts collections of decorative arts, ceramics, industrial design, textiles, clothing and graphic arts, as well as temporary exhibits. Located in the DHUB building, it was inaugurated in November 2013.
barcelona.cat/museudeldisseny



Museu Etnològic de Barcelona

The exhibitions at the Museum of Ethnology reflect a diverse and ever-changing Catalan society.
barcelona.cat/museuetnologic



Museu Frederic Marès

This museum displays the collection of sculptor Frederic Marès.
barcelona.cat/museumares



Casa-Museu Gaudí

This building, located in the famous Parc Güell, was where Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí lived for 20 years. It is now a museum devoted to his life and work.
casamuseugaudi.org



Museu d'Història de Barcelona

This museum dedicated to the history of the city of Barcelona includes part of the excavated remains of the original Roman city of Barcino, the original Barcelona.
museuhistoria.bcn.cat



Museu d'Història de Catalunya

Trace the history of Catalonia from prehistory to the present time.
barcelona.cat/museuhistoria



Museu Marítim de Barcelona

Barcelona's Maritime Museum is housed in the Royal Shipyards of Barcelona, a Gothic architecture ensemble dating from the late 13th century.
mmb.cat



Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)

One of the best museums in Barcelona, the MNAC is internationally known for its fine collection of Romanesque and Gothic art.
mnac.cat



Museu Picasso


The Picasso Museum is a key reference for understanding the formative years of Pablo Picasso. It also reveals his deep relationship with Barcelona
museupicasso.bcn.cat/en



Museu del Disseny de Barcelona

Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes

The Royal Monastery of St Mary of Pedralbes, founded in 1327, stands as a unique historical and cultural testament to the monastic life in the history of Barcelona and Catalonia.
monestirpedralbes.bcn.cat

 For more information on Barcelona's museums and cultural heritage centres, visit the City Council's Museums and Cultural Heritage page at cultura.barcelona

 You can get more information about the museums in Barcelona on the web app *Punts d'interès de la ciutat* (available in English). The app *La Nit dels Museus* provides information about the annual 'Museums at Night' event (available for iOS and Android). Both web apps are available at barcelona.cat/apps



Palau de la Música Catalana

MUSIC AND DANCE VENUES

Barcelona is home to world-class venues that host a variety of music and dance performances throughout the year.

L'Auditori

This impressive concert hall is the resident venue of the OBC, Barcelona Symphony and Catalonia National Orchestra, the Municipal Band and the Museum of Music. It also hosts visiting classical and contemporary artists.
auditori.cat

Gran Teatre del Liceu


Barcelona's grand opera house begins its season in October and ends in June.
liceubarcelona.cat/en


Mercat de les Flors

This theatre offers an intensive programme of avant-garde dance and drama.
mercatflors.cat

Palau de la Música Catalana

This beautiful concert hall, designed in the Catalan Modernist style by Lluís Domènech i Montaner, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Musical performances in the Palau range from symphonic and chamber music to jazz and traditional Catalan music.
palaumusica.cat/en

 Although flamenco is the folkloric music tradition of Southern Spain, you can also find good places to enjoy flamenco in Barcelona.
Visit flamenco.cat

 For more information on Barcelona's music and dance offerings, visit the City Council's Music and Performances pages at cultura.barcelona



Sónar Festival

▷ MUSIC FESTIVALS

📍 **Sónar**
Sónar is the International Festival of Advanced Music and New Media Art and it has been expanding our understanding of electronic music and digital culture for over 15 years.
sonar.es

📍 **Primavera Sound**
Since 2001, Primavera Sound has expanded its footprint as one of the key musical events of the Barcelona calendar.
primaverasound.es

📍 **Cruïlla - Barcelona Summer Festival**
Cruïlla is Barcelona's top summer festival. This is a three-day event held at the Parc Fòrum offering a series of concerts by international artists of different styles.
cruillabarcelona.com

📍 **Grec - Festival of Barcelona**
Starting in June, and lasting almost all summer, the Grec Festival brings together the best in theatre, music, dance and circus in venues all over the city.
festivalgrec.barcelona

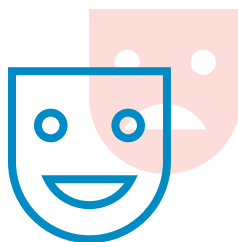
▷ THEATRE

Theatre productions in Barcelona are usually in either Catalan or Spanish, although you may also find some performances in other languages.

📍 **Teatre Lliure**
Teatre Lliure is Catalonia's most prestigious independent theatre.
teatrelliure.com

📍 **Teatre Nacional de Catalunya**
This building, one of Catalonia's paramount cultural centres, shows different types of productions in the Catalan language.
tnc.cat/ca/tnc-english

👁️ For more information on Barcelona's music and cultural offerings, visit the City Council's website at cultura.barcelona



▷ CINEMAS

Like television shows, foreign films are dubbed into Spanish or Catalan, except in original-version cinemas where films are screened in their original languages with subtitles in Spanish or Catalan. These cinemas show an eclectic mix of films, from mainstream Hollywood blockbusters to European art films.

 **Balmes Multicines**
grupbalana.com/es/cine/salas/balmes-multicines-vo

 **Boliche**
bolichecinemes.cat

 **Cinemes Texas**
cinemestexas.cat

 **Icària Yelmo Cineplex**
yelmocines.es/cartelera/barcelona/yelmo-cines-icaria

 **Maldà**
cinemamalda.com

 **Méliès Cinemes**
meliescinemes.com

 **Phenomena Experience**
phenomena-experience.com


 **Renoir-Florida Blanca**
cinesrenoir.com/cartelera/ciudad/BAR


 **Verdi**
cines-verdi.com/barcelona

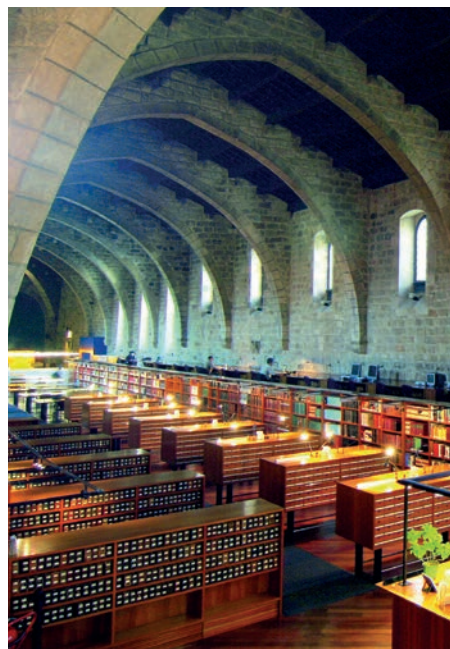
 **Zumzeig Cine Cooperativa**
zumzeigcine.coop/es

▷ LIBRARIES

Barcelona has a network of 39 public libraries open to all. With a free, non-transferable library card, you can use a range of services including borrowing physical or digital media (books, magazines, audio books, music CDs, films), reading at home, internet access, Wi-Fi networks, viewing specialist collections and other activities (taking part in book clubs, specific courses, etc.). The libraries are spread across the city's various districts and offer relational, open spaces and promote collective shared-learning initiatives.

 For more information on the location of libraries in Barcelona and their services, visit barcelona.cat/biblioteques

 You can find your closest library on the webapp *Punts d'interès de la ciutat* (available in English)
webapp.barcelona.cat/pics



Biblioteca de Catalunya



Centre Cívic Golferichs

▷ CIVIC AND COMMUNITY CENTRES

The city offers countless other opportunities for learning and enjoying cultural activities: cooking classes, music lessons or concerts, computer classes, dance lessons and much more. You can find them in several community centres (centres de barri), civic centres (centres cívics) and centres for the elderly, children and young people (casals per a gent gran, casals infantils, ludoteques and casals juvenils).

The following are just a few of the main civic and community centres in Barcelona which have an impressive calendar of events.

📍 **Centre Cívic Golferichs**
golferichs.org

📍 **Centre Cultural Casa Elizalde**
casaelizalde.com

📍 **Casa Orlandai**
casaorlandai.cat

📍 **Centre Cívic Pati Llimona**
patillimona.net



To search for more civic and community centres, go to barcelona.cat/centrescivics

▷ HOW TO BUY TICKETS

Tickets for the main sports and cultural events can be purchased from the following sources:

📍 **Tiquet Rambles**

Last Minute offers tickets for shows every day for the same day with a 50% discount. These can be bought 3 hours before the start of the performance selected at the Rambles Ticket office, Palau de la Virreina (La Rambla 99).
Tel: +34 933 16 10 00
barcelona.cat/tiquetrambles/en

📍 **Barcelona Tourism Board – Barcelona Turisme**

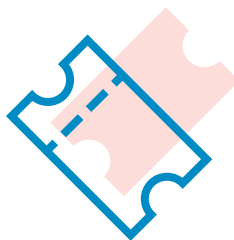
Tel: +34 906 30 12 82 / +34 93 285 38 34
visitbarcelona.com

📍 **Ticketea**

Tel: +34 902 044 226
ticketea.com

📍 **Ticketmaster**

Tel: +34 902 150 025
ticketmaster.es



11

Sport, outdoor activities and leisure



▷ PUBLIC SPORTS CENTRES

Several Barcelona districts have their own public sports and fitness centres (*CEM -centre esportiu municipal-Municipal Sports Centre*). These centres are well maintained and equipped with indoor and/or outdoor swimming pools, fitness and exercise equipment and facilities for a variety of sports. Most of the users are members who pay a fee. They also offer a wide range of activities for adults and children at very competitive prices.



For more information on sport in Barcelona and finding the public sports facilities nearest to your location, go to Barcelona City Council's sport website at barcelona.cat/esports

▷ PRIVATE SPORTS CENTRES

A number of private sports and fitness clubs are also available in Barcelona. They range from swimming and athletic clubs to large international gyms that offer various sport, exercise and spa facilities and fitness programmes. Specialised clubs offering tennis and racquet sports, swimming and water polo, gymnastics, martial arts or basketball are available in different districts.

▷ FOOTBALL

Football is by far the most popular sport in Spain. The football season starts in September and ends in May, and during this period hundreds of thousands of people flock to stadiums to watch Spanish football league games, with millions more following on the internet, TV and radio.

The country boasts some of the best football clubs in Europe, one of them being Barcelona's own Fútbol Club Barcelona, known familiarly to fans as "el Barça". FC Barcelona holds a long-standing rivalry with Real Madrid and matches between the two teams are much-anticipated events. Any triumph of FC Barcelona is cause for citywide celebration, complete with fireworks, honking cars and rowdy street parties especially at Canaletes, on the Rambla.

 fcbarcelona.cat

Barcelona is also home to another first-division club, Real Club Deportivo Espanyol (RCD Espanyol), which currently plays in the Cornellà-El Prat Stadium inaugurated in 2009. Their supporters are called "pericos" thanks to their light blue and white jerseys, and the cross-town rivalry with FC Barcelona is also a match not to miss.

 rcdespanyol.com

▷ OTHER SPORT

Golf

Less than an hour from the Barcelona city centre there is an excellent range of 10 golf courses that will allow you to discover new greens.

 barcelonaismuchmore.com

Skiing

The Pyrenees offer ski enthusiasts plenty of snow and blue skies many days of the year. Barcelona skiers head to ski resorts in the Catalan Pyrenees, some of which are connected to Barcelona by train links. A two-hour drive will take you to the nearest ski resort.

Sailing and water sports

The beaches of Barcelona and its surrounding areas are home to several nautical and yacht clubs offering boat rentals, sailing lessons and a variety of water sports. The city also has a municipal sailing school.

 velabarcelona.com

Base Nàutica Municipal de la Mar Bella

It is a municipal facility whose main objective is to promote beach and water sports. It is located in the beach of La Mar Bella.

basenautica.org


Olympic Canal

The 1992 Olympics created lots of wonderful sports infrastructures, and the Olympic Canal is one you can continue to enjoy today. The installations include places to water ski, wakeboard, practice archery or mini golf among many other outdoor activities.

canalolimpic.cat

▷ LIVE SPORTS EVENTS

Barcelona has world-class stadiums for large-scale sports and musical events, as well as more intimate venues for smaller events, putting it on most headliners' calendars.

-  **Camp Nou**
This football stadium is home to the famous FC Barcelona team.
fcbarcelona.cat
-  **Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya**
The Montmeló racetrack to the north of Barcelona is home to the Formula One Grand Prix and the Moto GP Grand Prix.
circuitcat.com
-  **Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys**
This was the main stadium for the 1992 Olympics.
estadiolimpic.cat
-  **Palau Sant Jordi**
This indoor sporting arena is used for major live events.
palausantjordi.cat











You can find information regarding main sport events taking place in Barcelona at bcnsports.visitbarcelona.com



Palau Sant Jordi

▷ PARKS AND GARDENS

Barcelona has an extensive network of lush parks and gardens, many of them of important cultural and historical value.

-  **Jardins de Can Castelló**
These elegant, romantic gardens used to be the grand entrance to an old country house.
-  **Jardins de Can Sentmenat**
This is a romantic, classical garden with beautiful views of Barcelona and the Collserola hills.
-  **Jardins de Joan Maragall**
These gardens feature wooded avenues, vast lawns, ornamental fountains, outdoor sculptures and a small palace.
-  **Jardins de Laribal**
These gardens include beautiful terraces, pathways, small squares, ponds and lush plant life.
-  **Jardins de la Tamarita**
This serene, restful garden has as its centrepiece a small pathway guarded by statues representing America, Africa, Asia and Europe.
-  **Jardins de la Universitat**
These classical gardens form a large, green semicircle around the University of Barcelona's historical campus. It features two enclosed patios similar to a monastery cloister, around which rise the beautiful buildings of the Mathematics and Philology faculties.
-  **Jardins del Palau de les Hores**
These gardens stretch in front of the emblematic Les Hores Palace, built at the end of the 19th century at the foot of the Collserola hills.
-  **Jardins del Palau de Pedralbes**
The stately, English- and French-inspired gardens of the Pedralbes Royal Palace feature romantic bridges and verdant areas.



Parc del Laberint d'Horta

Jardins del Teatre Grec

These gardens were created on Montjuïc hill for the Universal Exposition of 1929. It is home to the amphitheatre that hosts many of the performances during the Grec Festival of Barcelona.

Parc de la Ciutadella

This eclectically designed park is famous for its magnificent waterfall, elegant 19th century buildings, beautiful landscaping and rich vegetation.

Parc del Centre del Poblenou

With more than five hectares of green, this park has Mediterranean autochthonous vegetation, which shares space with thematic areas and with the avant-garde of its design, the work of the French architect Jean Nouvel.

Parc del Guinardó


This park combines lush woodland with an elegant garden. It is one of the most extensive green areas of Barcelona.

Parc del Laberint d'Horta

This park is known for its maze of cypress bushes. It is also home to the city's oldest garden, a neoclassical treasure from the 18th century.

Parc Güell


This is the city's most famous park, one that has come to symbolise all of Barcelona. It is a testament to Antoni Gaudí's genius and his skill in blending architectural elements with the natural environment. This park was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984. It is the only park mentioned in this section where you have to pay to go in.


 For more information, visit: **barcelona.cat/parkguell** or download the app *Parc Güell, guia oficial de la zona monumental* (free app, available for iOS and Android) at **barcelona.cat/apps**

Turó Parc

This is one of Barcelona's most emblematic parks. Visitors are welcomed by the statue of the Catalan cellist Pau Casals. The park also has an oval pond surrounded by poplars and plane trees, a large, grassy lawn, an open-air theatre and a bowling green.

Apart from these culturally significant parks, Barcelona is dotted by dozens of urban and botanical parks.

 For more information on the status of the various parks and gardens of Barcelona, visit **barcelona.cat/parcsijardins**

 You can also check the webapp *Punts d'interès de la ciutat* **webapp.barcelona.cat/pics**, and check the information in the section 'Natural Areas'

▶ BEACHES

In 2010, Barcelona was named the top beach city in the world by National Geographic and continues to lead the ranking ahead of cities such as Nice, Cape Town, Rio and Sydney. The multitudes that flock to the city's beaches can attest to this. Beachgoers hit the sands during the daytime to relax and play and in the night time to enjoy the beachfront's buzzing nightlife. Barcelona's beaches are easily accessible from the city centre by metro and by bicycle.

Dogs are allowed on all beaches from the beginning of October until the beginning on June.

📍 Sant Sebastià

This 1,085-metre stretch of beach is the closest to the city centre. It is the oldest and most traditional beach in the city together with Barceloneta. This beach is frequented by Barcelona locals. Many important water sports clubs are based here.

📍 Barceloneta

This beach, which is approximately 901 metres long, is a favourite among foreign visitors. It is one of the biggest and most traditional beaches of the city. It features plenty of leisure and sports equipment.

📍 Nova Icària

This beach, one of the quietest in Barcelona, is where beachgoers prefer to linger. It is right in the centre of the city's coastline. It has equipment for different sports such as table tennis and volleyball.

📍 Bogatell

This beach, a result of Barcelona's seafront revitalization in the early 1990s, is a safe and quiet beach bordered by a bicycle track.

📍 Mar Bella

This beach was developed during the preparations for the 1992 Olympic Games. It has a loyal following, especially among young people and residents of the Sant Martí district. It has a bicycle path, a children's play area and other recreational facilities. It also has a designated nudist beach area.

📍 Nova Mar Bella

This beach also came into existence during Barcelona's seafront restoration for the 1992 Olympics. It is a peaceful beach popular with women and young beachgoers.

📍 Llevant

This is Barcelona's newest beach and it is the last of the beaches on Barcelona's coastline. Dogs have recently been allowed on this stretch of the beach all year long.

👁️ For more information, visit the Beaches page at barcelona.cat/platges

👁️ You can also check the webapp *Punts d'interès de la ciutat* barcelona.cat/apps and check the information in the section "Natural Areas"

Apart from the beaches in Barcelona, locals and tourists alike are drawn to nearby seaside towns such as Castelldefels and Sitges and to beaches on the Maresme coast. Further afield are the beautiful coastal regions of the Costa Brava in the province of Girona, and the Costa Daurada in the province of Tarragona.



Platja de la Barceloneta

▶ ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

The list of cultural and leisure activities aimed at young people is extraordinary and practically endless. That is why, in 2007, UNICEF recognised Barcelona as a Child-Friendly City, thanks to its countless initiatives aimed at including children and treating them as what they are: citizens with the right to enjoy their city and to make their voices heard.

📍 **L'Aquàrium de Barcelona**

The aquarium features 35 tanks, 11,000 animals of 450 different species, an 80-metre underwater tunnel and six million litres of water.
aquariumbcn.com

📍 **Font Màgica de Montjuïc**

This illuminated fountain was originally built for the 1929 Barcelona Universal Exposition. Kids love its music and light show held from Thursday to Sunday in the summer and on Fridays and Saturdays the rest of the year.
barcelona.cat/fontmagica

📍 **Zoo de Barcelona**

The zoo has a wide variety of animals on show. It also has a restaurant, picnic area, electric cars, ponies and a mini-train.
barcelona.cat/zoo

📍 **Parc d'Atraccions del Tibidabo**

Adults and kids can take the Tramvia Blau and the Funicular to the top of Tibidabo hill, where fun awaits at the Tibidabo Amusement Park.
barcelona.cat/tibidabo

📍 **Món Llibre**

This is an annual literary festival held in April which is especially designed for children and young teenagers. It boasts workshops and activities related to books, as well as music and theatre shows for young audiences.
barcelona.cat/monllibre



Font Màgica de Montjuïc



For further information, visit

[meet.barcelona.cat/en/discover-barcelona/
live-barcelona/for-the-family](http://meet.barcelona.cat/en/discover-barcelona/live-barcelona/for-the-family)
visitbarcelona.com/family

There are different platforms and forums with useful information for families with children:

📍 **Kids in Barcelona**

Barcelona's English-speaking contact group for mums, dads, babies and tots as well as information about events going on in the city of interest to families.
kidsinbarcelona.com

📍 **Mamaproof**

A content and action platform to transform cities into more friendly and inclusive spaces for families (in Spanish).
mamaproof.org/barcelona

📍 **Mum Abroad**

Articles about parenting and interviews with expats and their families as well as recommendations from other families abroad.
spain.mumabroad.com/cat

▷ VARIED SHOPPING OFFER

Barcelona has become a magnet for shoppers from all over the world thanks to its many fabulous shopping opportunities: around 35,000 shops spread throughout the city. The retail offering is based on combining traditional family shops, major international brands and innovative proposals.

The city has many department stores and shopping centres and shopping streets with exclusive designer boutiques and interesting international and local brands. But here you can also find lesser known shopping areas and neighbourhood shops, as well as markets and street fairs offering quality products at bargain prices.

Barcelona has developed more than 35 neighbourhood shopping areas or *eixos comercials*, where you can do some shopping and also enjoy dining areas and leisure activities. The *eixos comercials* favour a close relationship between all parts of the urban fabric – residents, shopkeepers, restaurants and the administration. The businesses that participate in the *eixos comercials* support local events, gastronomic tours or special offers among other initiatives.



For more information, visit eixosbcn.org and barcelonaoberta.cat

The city also offers retail establishments that provide distinctive and unique products under the Barcelona Unique Shops brand. You will be able to meet craftspeople and designers in their workshops, discover shops dating back more than 100 years, taste gastronomic delicacies at delicatessen or traditional grocery shops known as *colmadors*, encounter art and design at the museum shops and find truly sustainable fashions.



Visit the specific information in 9 languages about the city's main shopping zones at barcelonashoppingcity.com



Mercat de la Boqueria

▷ MUNICIPAL MARKETS

Barcelona is one of the few cities in the world with a network of over 40 markets scattered throughout its neighbourhoods. Barcelona's charming markets offer more than just fresh produce and excellent local products. All of them are getting modernised by introducing new facilities and services in line with the commercial demands of the 21st century.

Their beautiful architecture and unique atmosphere make them a place to go. The most well-known market is "La Boqueria" on Les Rambles, but it is worth visiting the municipal market in your neighbourhood to get fresh produce, competitive prices and personalised attention.

The following is a list of some of the city's most visited markets.



Mercat de la Boqueria
boqueria.info



Mercat de la Concepció
laconcepcio.com



Mercat del Ninot
mercatdelninot.com/




Mercat de Sant Antoni
mercatdesantantoni.com




Mercat de Santa Caterina
mercatsantacaterina.com

There are also a few non-food markets where you can find antiques, old books and collectibles, as well as clothes and housewares. These are the most popular ones:

 **Dominical de Sant Antoni**
Collectibles (books, magazines, comics, stamps, video games...)
dominicaldesantantoni.com

 **Encants del Mercat de Sant Antoni**
Home textiles, children's, men's and women's clothing, bags, shoes, accessories.

 **Encants Barcelona - Fira de Bellcaire**
Antiques, collectibles, houseware, furniture, clothes...
encantsbcn.com



For more information about all Barcelona's markets, visit barcelona.cat/mercats



Encants Barcelona



RESTAURANTS

In Barcelona, you will be spoilt for choice when it comes to dining out. There are restaurants for every taste and budget in the city.

Barcelona's dining establishments offer traditional Catalan and Spanish fare, seafood specialities and a variety of international franchises and ethnic or exotic cuisines.

Barcelona is also the place to go for exquisite fine dining, as there are 31 Michelin stars in the city and it has some of the world's most innovative chefs and restaurateurs.

Just be aware that local mealtimes are different than many European countries. Lunch is served from around 1.30 p.m. until 4.00 p.m. Dinner service usually starts at 9.00 p.m. onwards, although some restaurants open a little earlier in the evening.

For lunch, many restaurants offer a daily menu or *menú del dia*, a set meal consisting of two courses, a drink, plus a dessert or coffee.

And don't forget to try Barcelona's excellent tapas, which you can have at any time of the day.



To search for restaurants in Barcelona, you can visit the Food and Wine section at the website of the Barcelona Tourism board: visitbarcelona.com



Plaça Reial

NIGHTLIFE

Barcelona has a very diverse nightlife offer, which responds to all tastes and will make you stay up late at night.

Bars, pubs, discotheques and concert halls are the ideal places to get in touch with the local population, while dancing, having a drink or listening to live music. The attributes of Barcelona's nightlife take different forms in the different neighbourhoods or areas of the city.

El Raval and El Born, two of the most eclectic, multicultural and trendy neighbourhoods, host in their narrow and vivid streets many bars, bohemian spaces and cocktail bars which are among the most popular places on Barcelona's night-time scene. Similarly, in the squares, alleys and corners of the Gràcia neighbourhood, you will also discover intimate bars and clubs full of charm.

In the Eixample, there is also an endless number of bars, pubs and clubs and some of the most emblematic discotheques in the city. Here you can find different nightlife styles and ambiances, where everybody can fit his/her preferences.

Right in the heart of the Eixample, there is an area of great reference for the LGTBI community, the so-called Gaixample, immersed in an environment of tolerance and freedom. It offers a variety of gay-friendly bars, clubs, shops and restaurants and you can see the rainbow flag hanging from balconies and in shop and bar windows.

Uptown, in the Sant Gervasi neighbourhood, there is an area near Santaló and Marià Cubí Streets that concentrates many bars and clubs. You will find a chic and sophisticated atmosphere to have fun and relax.

Poble Nou, a historical industrial area of Barcelona, is now home to large discotheques and spacious concert halls with a wide range of alternative rock and pop music that appeals to many young and not so young people.

Near the sea, in the areas of Port Vell and in Port Olímpic, you will also find much fun both in summer and winter, with bars, restaurants and nightclubs.

Another area of interest is around Paral·lel. In the past, this avenue was famous for its cabarets and music halls. Today, it still concentrates many theatres and recreational offerings and it is sometimes referred to as the 'Barcelona's Broadway' because of the night-time ambience and entertainment.



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Diversity and social rights

Barcelona is an open city where citizens can freely show their personal identity. The City Council and other institutions have created supervisory entities which ensure that civil rights are fostered and protected, both in terms of identity and social inclusion.

The vast majority of the population shows a respectful attitude towards diversity and supports policies that promote equality for groups that have historically suffered discrimination, such as ethnic/religious minorities, women or the LGBTI community. Thus, newcomers with different backgrounds will find in Barcelona a place to live safely and a social network that will help them integrate into Catalan society with equal rights.

¡Hola!



Hello!

مرحبا



To ask for information regarding social rights:



Office for Non-Discrimination

Entity that guarantees human rights at a local level and deals with discrimination issues. The service is aimed at all city residents, putting special emphasis on forms of discrimination relating to origins, cultural or religious affiliations, sexual orientation and gender identity, among other things.

barcelona.cat/oficina-no-discriminacio



For more information, visit

barcelona.cat/dretsidiversitat

barcelona.cat/novaciudadania

RELIGIONS

Due to history and tradition, the great majority of the population in Barcelona is Roman Catholic. Nonetheless, a respectful environment for followers of other religions can be found throughout Catalonia, and in fact public places of worship can be found in or near the city for most major religions including (but not limited to): Anglican, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism, Jehovah's Witness, Hinduism, Eastern Churches, Seventh-day Adventists, Taoism, Sikhism and Judaism.

LGTBI

Since the 1970s, Barcelona has been one of the leading cities in the world promoting the rights of lesbian, gays, transsexuals, bisexuals and intersexuals (LGTBI). Thanks to the welcoming nature of residents and authorities, the city has become the leading Mediterranean tourism destination for the LGTBI community. Same sex marriage was legalised in Spain in 2005, and in 2014 the Parliament of Catalonia passed a pioneering law to fight LGTBI phobia.

Barcelona hosts a vibrant LGTBI community. Although there is not an LGTBI residential quarter, the central *Gaixample* area, often referred to as the *Gaixample*, has a higher concentration of openly gay-friendly shops, bars, hotels, restaurants and clubs.

LGTBI oriented public administration services:



Area of Female and Civil Rights of the Barcelona City Council

Secretariat of the Municipal Council of Gays, Lesbians and transgender and intergender women and men
cmglidht@bcn.cat



Area for the equality of rights and non-discrimination of LGTBI persons of the Government of Catalonia

Family Secretariat.
arealgt.bsf@gencat.cat

LGTBI NGO's and Associations:



Casal Lambda

The pioneering Catalan NGO association aimed at the normalisation of homosexuality. Since 1976, it has offered gays, lesbians, transgender and intersexual citizens meetings and orientation, and has information and a documentation centre on sexuality aimed at professionals and researchers.
lambda.cat



Acegal

ACEGAL is the Catalan Association of businesses for Gay and Lesbian and the organizer of Pride Barcelona.
acegal.org



Panteres Grogues

This association (literally “Yellow Panthers”) is a non-profit organisation that aims to provide a friendly environment where gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals and intersexuals can practice sport freely and in a relaxed way. The association is also open to anyone who wants to share activities with the LGBTI community.

panteresgrogues.cat

LGTBI oriented events:



Pride Barcelona

It is an event organised in June-July to welcome diversity in Barcelona, with a Pride Parade and different parties, concerts, sport and family activities.

pridebarcelona.org



Circuit Festival – International Gay & Lesbian Event

Circuit is the largest festival in the world specialised in LGTBI nightlife & culture. It takes place in August and features 13 days of cultural, sporting and recreational activities.

circuitfestival.net



International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

Barcelona’s internationally acclaimed International LGTBI film festival.

barcelonaiafilmfestival.com

WOMEN

Women will find in Barcelona a supportive social network that offers opportunities and defends equal rights for them. The City Council has implemented the *Regidoria de Feminismes i LGTBI*, a Department that aims to cover the specific needs of women and the LGTBI community. Women can take an active part in the City Council’s policies through the *Consell Municipal de les Dones*.

There are a number of organisations that offer legal and psychological assistance to women, as well as training courses and help against gender violence.



For more information, visit

barcelona.cat/dones

barcelona.cat/bcnantimasclista

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES

Barcelona is willing to lend a helping hand to those people who have to leave their home countries because of a war or a humanitarian crisis. For this reason, the City Council launched the ‘Barcelona, Refuge City’ plan in 2015, whose purpose is to foster the means to receive and assist refugees, providing services such as legal and administrative support, language learning, tools to find employment, etc. The aim is to support immigrants and offer them equal opportunities so that they can reach the ultimate goal of becoming independent citizens in their host country.



Barcelona, Refuge City
ciutatrefugi.barcelona/en

The local government has a Service Centre for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER) since 1999. This is a free service specialised in international mobility which provides information and advice on relevant topics for newcomers, such as asylum, immigration or voluntary return.

 **Service Centre for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER)**
barcelona.cat/novaciudadania

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COHESION

For the past decades, Barcelona has made an effort to develop public organisations and mechanisms to guarantee that all citizens will have access to education, healthcare, housing and other basic social rights.

The *Regidoria de Drets Socials* of the City Council takes care of these social services and they protect the rights of vulnerable groups of people, such as children, elderly people, people with disabilities or groups who are at risk of exclusion.

 **Regidoria de Drets Socials**
barcelona.cat/dretssocials



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES


Barcelona has a large network of associations where volunteer opportunities abound whether you speak the local language yet or not. The areas covered are numerous: from humanitarian help, human rights, children, immigration and refuge, senior citizens, environment, minorities, animal welfare or health, among others.

A few examples are:

 **Amics de la gent gran**
This association provides support to the elderly folk.
amicdsdelagentgran.org

 **Banc dels Aliments de Barcelona**
A non-profit foundation that gathers the food surplus in the food industry, markets, supermarkets, schools and other organisations, distributing them among local entities that will guide them towards those in need.
bancdelsaliments.org

 **Chiringuito de Dios**
Support to the homeless giving them food and clothing to shelter and at the same time delivering human warmth.
elchiringuitodedios.com

 **Fundació Surt**
Association working to make effective the rights of women and to eradicate discrimination based on sex.
surt.org

 **Lliga per a la protecció d'animals i plantes de Barcelona**
Animal shelters need volunteers to help take care of abandoned pets and fight against the abuse of animals.
protectorabcn.es

 **Ronald McDonald House**
A home away from home for families of hospitalised children in Barcelona.
casaronaldbarcelona.org

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Working and professional career



▷ WORKING HOURS

Working time is usually regulated by collective bargaining agreements. The average full-time working week is 40 hours. The typical work day starts between 8.00-9.00 a.m. Workers usually go take lunch at 1.30-2.00 p.m. Work starts again between 3.00-4.00 p.m. and finishes between 6.00-7.30 p.m.

In big companies and multinational corporates established in Barcelona, you will not find long lunch breaks and a more compact working schedule.

There is a citizen movement that promotes hourly reform in Catalan society, compacting the workday to leave work earlier, introducing more flexible work schedules and advancing the time of meals, both lunch and dinner. In this way, the habits in Catalonia would be synchronised better with the ones in the rest of Europe and locals would be able to gain more time to improve health and quality of life.

Many workers also enjoy a shortened work schedule from June to September, during summer period, usually from 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

▶ LABOUR MARKET AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

After a long and deep crisis suffered by the Spanish economy, the unemployment rate in the city of Barcelona reached records close to 20% of the active population, with the high point in 2014. Since then, the labour market has shown signs of recovery. The economic reactivation experienced since then has generated an increase in the number of jobs and the gradual reduction of unemployment figures, so that at the beginning of 2018 more than 1,000,000 people work in Barcelona and the city's unemployment rate is 10%.

Today, the area of Barcelona offers plenty of opportunities in emerging sectors such as artistic and creative industries, recreational and entertainment, hospitality and tourism, construction, commerce, logistics, telecommunications and ICT. There are also highly qualified or specialised professional profiles that have a high demand. Foreigners with expertise or management skills in such profiles can find interesting jobs, and non-EU nationals may also have less trouble getting a work permit approved when local workers cannot fill the position.



For more information on Employment:

SEPE – Servicio Público Estatal de Empleo (Spanish Public Service of Employment)
sepe.es (only in Spanish)

Labour website of the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalan Government)
treball.gencat.cat



For information on procedures for work permits, have a look at:

treball.gencat.cat/en/ambits/estrangeria

SOC – Servei Públic d'Ocupació de Catalunya (Catalan Public Service of Employment)
serveiocupacio.gencat.cat

Labour website of Barcelona City Council – Barcelona Activa
barcelona.cat/treball



▶ JOB SEARCH TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Barcelona Activa, the local development agency of Barcelona City Council, offers free tools, online resources, personalised advice services and training activities to guide people through their academic and professional careers, the acquisition and development of skills and professional competencies and job search strategies.

The first step is to analyse yourself and discover what your main professional key skills and professional interests are. It is also advisable to learn how to prepare a job application, adapting the CV and cover letter to the Catalan job market, and learn how to conduct a job interview to avoid any cultural blunders.

Once you've found a suitable job, you will then need to prepare your application. You should adapt your CV and cover letter to the Spanish job market, and learn how to conduct yourself in a job interview to avoid any cultural blunders.

In the Barcelona Activa website barcelona.cat/treball, have a look at the following navigation routes:

To explore the sectors that are generating employment demands and the most requested professional profiles in the Barcelona area:

- Market > Industries

Learn more about your skills and professional interests:

- Person > Professional interests > Documents & App and video resources
- Person > Key Skills > Documents & App and video resources

Create your CV, cover letter and prepare a job interview:

- Tools > Industries (job search process) > Documents
- Tools > Channels for the job search > Documents
- Tools > CV and cover letter > Documents
- Tools > Job Interview > Documents & App and video resources
- Tools > 2.0 and personal branding > Documents

Apart from the website resources, Barcelona Activa offers a range of training courses in English that revolve around employment opportunities in the city in emerging sectors, job search strategies, creating a CV and preparing for job interviews, as well as skills to build professional networks and guidance on handling career moves.

Another way to find a job is through the creation of a network of contacts. An interesting way is to look for expats and business groups on social media networks or local networking groups in your field of work.

Find a list of groups and clubs in chapter 14 of this guide.

▶ SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Another option is to become a self-employer (*empresari autònom*) or to create a business project.

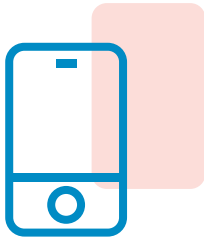
The city, through Barcelona Activa, offers comprehensive support to international entrepreneurs who want to move to Barcelona to start up. With more than 30 years of history, Barcelona Activa has developed a methodology and a portfolio of services people who want to turn their business idea into a viable company.



Have a look at barcelona.cat/emprenedoria



Barcelona International Community Day



▶ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Cibernàrium is the skills acquisition and technological dissemination programme of Barcelona Activa - Barcelona City Council. It offers training for professionals, as well as Internet initiation activities for all city residents.

The Cibernàrium offers a wide range of activities which are short-term, highly practical and focus on a very specific topic, usually a solution, a concept or a technological tool that helps participants to develop their technology skills and their professional training.

It also publishes informative materials in different formats: video courses, activity dossiers and multimedia content.



For more information, visit barcelona.cat/cibernarium

▶ WELCOMING AND ACTIVITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL TALENT

Barcelona is a vibrant, enterprising city and a magnet for international talent. It is a city which helps people with their personal integration and connects them with the local community via:

- Relocation guides and information
- Welcome and information sessions in English about living and working in Barcelona
- Seminars, workshops, expat breakfasts and after-work meet-ups with interesting topics and the opportunity to make contacts
- City tours to find out about the opportunities Barcelona has to offer.

All of these activities are organised throughout the year, although their flagship event is the highlight for foreigners arriving in Barcelona to live and work. **Barcelona International Community Day** is an event to welcome, provide information and advertise services aimed at the international community residing in Barcelona. This includes: a fair with different stalls for businesses and entities associated with international talent, a programme of talks and workshops, networking activities and fun, cultural and children's activities.



For more information

Email:

citypromotion@barcelonactiva.cat

barcelona.cat/internationalcommunityday



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Doing business

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▶ TEN GOOD REASONS FOR DOING BUSINESS IN BARCELONA

1 A prime location

Barcelona is the southern gateway to the European market (500 million consumers), the centre of an emerging economic Euroregion, the capital of the Euro-Mediterranean area (with a market of 461 million consumers), and presents a bridge with The Maghreb and a springboard to Latin America.

2 Accessible with good transport connections

Barcelona is the only city in Southern Europe that concentrates in 12 linear kilometres one of the largest multi-modal ports in the Mediterranean, a high-speed train connection, a vast intercontinental airport, motorways that are connected to the European network and to The Maghreb, the second largest trade-fair ground in Europe and one of the largest logistics areas in the South of Europe.



3 The powerhouse of a large, dynamic and diverse economic area

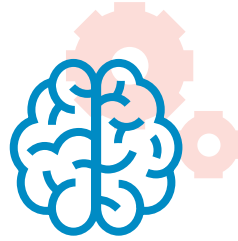
Barcelona is leader of a large economic area, open to the world, with a long history in commerce and industry and a close-knit and dynamic business network. Although advanced services form the basis of its economic structure, as they do in all large European cities, industry still holds significant importance in the metropolitan region. The city has a diversified economic structure and opts for knowledge-intensive activities that generate high-quality employment, are environmentally responsible and have a positive impact on society.

4 Successful foreign investment

Historically, Catalonia has been and still is one of the regions favoured by foreign investors landing in Spain. Currently, more than 7,000 foreign companies have head offices based in Catalonia, of which 90% are located in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. Out of the foreign companies based in Spain, more than 50% of all Japanese, Italian, US, French, Austrian and Swiss companies can be found in Catalonia.

5 Strategic economic sectors

Barcelona, with its highly diversified economy, is intensively developing various economic sectors like ICT-mobile, life sciences, electric mobility and sustainable energies, social and health services, media and smart cities, offering interesting business and investment opportunities.



6 A talent magnet

Barcelona boasts a well-educated human capital that nurtures innovation and creativity. More than 50% of the active population in the city work in knowledge-intensive services. Barcelona has specialists in a huge variety of fields. In the Barcelona area, there are 9 highly prestigious public and private universities that offer excellent degree and post-graduate programmes in a wide range of fields. Two of these universities are ranked in the top 3 in Spain, and two of the business schools in Barcelona are in the top ten in Europe.

7 The home of creativity, research and innovation

With its cosmopolitan atmosphere, history, language and age-old culture, Mediterranean light and entrepreneurial and unconventional spirit, Barcelona has showcased itself as the ideal setting for encouraging innovation and creativity in the brightest talents in the arts and sciences. The city's features mentioned above have also been complemented in recent decades by a robust array of research and science facilities, especially in the sectors of biomedicine (Biomedical Research Park of Barcelona), ICT (National Centre for Supercomputing), particle acceleration (ALBA synchrotron) and photonics (Catalan Institute of Photonic Sciences). These facilities have encouraged a large scientific community to flourish, attracting international scientific talent and generating prolific scientific output.

8 Entrepreneurial and Start-up City

Barcelona's entrepreneurial ecosystem is being strengthened thanks to companies that have achieved worldwide success, the emergence of numerous start-ups, business incubators, start-up accelerators, co-working spaces, business schools, investors, venture capital companies, business angels, an events calendar of meet-ups and knowledge exchanges, and a powerful network of both public and private support initiatives. Business creation is particularly active in various sub-sectors, such as mobile applications and the Internet of Things, e-Commerce, video games, big data and artificial intelligence and biotech, among other sub-sectors. Nowadays, Barcelona is one of Europe's most vibrant technological and entrepreneurial hubs.

9 One of the best standards of living in Europe

Barcelona is rated the 4th best European city in terms of quality of life according to its citizens in light of the European Commission's Quality of Life in Cities 2015 survey. Similarly, according to Forbes Magazine, Barcelona is also the 3rd happiest city in the world. The reason for this is that Barcelona is a very pleasant place to live and work, offering sunshine, beaches and mountains all year round. The city enjoys a splendid cultural and commercial offering, a quality healthcare system, efficient and safe public transport, and a Mediterranean lifestyle in an urban environment with a unique personality.

10 A city with a prestigious reputation

With its internationally renowned prestige and strong identity, various independent international studies and comparatives have placed Barcelona in leading positions in relation to various urban indicators. This positive perception and international standing of the Barcelona brand brings value to companies that operate in the city and is a pull factor for economic activity, international talent and investment.

► MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESS CREATION

Barcelona City Council offers a whole range of services and resources through Barcelona Activa, the local economic development agency.

Among other services, Barcelona Activa offers free, customised roadmaps for entrepreneurs that guide them, step-by-step, through the process of successfully starting a company in Barcelona. This roadmap includes:

- Various digital tools (also available in English), such as an online Business Plan.
- Spaces that can be used at no cost to design business projects and meet other entrepreneurs with whom to liaise in the Glòries Entrepreneurship Centre.
- A wide range of training seminars about starting out (some available in English).
- An expert advice service (also available in English) to assess the feasibility of a business project.
- A powerful municipal network of business incubators and technology parks for the most technologically innovative projects that launch activities with high added value for the city.



To access this service, you need to attend a welcome session for entrepreneurs (also available in English). To register or find out more information about the support services for entrepreneurs, visit barcelona.cat/emprenedoria

If you want to be aware of what's going on in Barcelona's start-up and innovation, have a look at the following.

▷ MUNICIPAL LANDING SERVICES FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES (INVESTMENT PROJECT)

Barcelona Activa's Business Support Office (*Oficina d'Atenció a les Empreses, OAE*) offers a Business Landing service for Barcelona-based investment projects. This one-stop shop service, which is free of charge and fully confidential, includes:

- Information and advice about the process of setting up a subsidiary company or a branch in Barcelona
- Online service to rapidly set up a business
- Support in recruitment processes
- Services to assist in the search for suitable business locations
- Temporary soft-landing office spaces
- Information about potential suppliers
- Networking with other stakeholders in the business ecosystem



To access this service and more information, visit barcelona.cat/empresa



Barcelona Activa's Business Support Office

▷ LOCAL KEY AGENTS FOR BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENTS



ACCIÓ – Catalonia Trade & Investment

Catalonia Trade & Investment is the Generalitat (regional government of Catalonia) agency for foreign investment and business competition. It specialises in promoting innovation and business internationalisation and operates from 40 offices across the world.

accio.gencat.cat
catalonia.com



Barcelona Activa

Barcelona Activa is the local economic development agency of Barcelona City Council. It promotes employment and business creation, and supports companies in providing solutions to meet the needs of the city's residents, across all neighbourhoods and from the perspective of the plural, social and sustainable economy.

barcelonactiva.cat



Barcelona Airport

Barcelona El Prat International Airport is located 12 km to the south west of the city and has three runways and two passenger terminals, Terminal 1 and Terminal 2, which are connected to the city via the metro network.

aena.es/ca/aeroport-barcelona/index.html



Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB)

The AMB is the public administration for the metropolitan area of Barcelona, which occupies 636 km², comprising 36 municipalities in which more than 3.2 million people live.

amb.cat



Barcelona Tech City

An association open to all constituents of the digital and technological business ecosystem in Barcelona.

ecommercetechbcn.com



Barcelona Tourism

A consortium to promote the city's tourism abroad, both to those who visit as tourists and conference delegates. It has a programme called Barcelona Convention Bureau (BCB) that promotes Barcelona as the leading venue for meetings. It offers free advisory services for organising meetings in the city.
visitbarcelona.com



Biocat: Catalonia's Bioregion

An organisation driven by the Generalitat (regional government of Catalonia) and Barcelona City Council that coordinates, boosts and promotes biotechnology, biomedicine and medical technologies to strengthen the role of these fields as economic engines in Catalonia.
biocat.cat/en



EURECAT

An advanced technology centre that promotes and contributes to the growth of sectors such as ICT and media in Barcelona and Catalonia, by supporting applied research and knowledge transfer and technology in the sectors mentioned above.
eurecat.org



Fira de Barcelona - Barcelona Trade Fair

An international benchmark in the field of fairs and congresses and their organisation. It has two large venues Fira 1 Montjuic and Fira 2 Gran Via, amounting to an exhibition space covering a total of 400,000 m² (the 2nd largest in Europe). Events such as the Mobile World Congress, Alimentaria and Construmat are held at the Fira de Barcelona.
firabarcelona.com



Fundació Institució Catalana de Suport a la Recerca (The Catalan Foundation of Support for Research)

Its main mission is to improve the social knowledge of science and the search for new avenues for cooperation between public and private sectors in scientific investigation initiatives and projects in Catalonia.
recercat.cat



Mercabarna

Mercabarna is a food city that operates 24 hours a day with the aim of guaranteeing the supply of fresh food to the public. The facility houses companies specialising in the distribution, preparation, import and export of fresh and frozen products.
mercabarna.es



Official Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Shipping of Barcelona

This is an autonomous body that defends the interests of businesspeople and companies in the Barcelona area in trade and professional relationships.
cambrabcn.org



Port of Barcelona

The port of Barcelona is one of the main infrastructures at the service of the region's economy, for the maritime transportation of goods and people and a wide range of specialised services.
portdebarcelona.cat



Xarxa de Parcs Tecnològics i Científics de Catalunya (Network of Technological and Scientific Parks in Catalonia)

This network brings together technological and scientific business parks based in Catalonia.
xpcat.net



Zona Franca Consortium of Barcelona (CZFB)

The CZFB is a public economic revitalisation organisation whose main mission is to manage The Zone Franca Industrial Estate and its Zona Franca Customs Authority. It has both industrial and urban land in various stages of development.
elconsorci.es

▶ CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND FOREIGN TRADE OFFICES

Below is a list of some of the main Chambers of Commerce and foreign trade offices in Barcelona:

Argentina

- 📍 Argentine Chamber of Commerce in Spain
camaraargentina.com
- 📍 Promotion Centre of the Argentine Republic in Barcelona
cbarc.cancilleria.gov.ar

Austria

- 📍 Advantage Austria - Austrian Trade Office
advantageaustria.org/es/oesterreich-in-spain/Buero-Barcelona.es.html

Belgium

- 📍 Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Barcelona
ccbllb.com/en
- 📍 Trade Council of the Brussels-Capital Region
brussels-spain.com
- 📍 Economic Representation of Flanders
flandersinvestmentandtrade.com
- 📍 Wallonia Trade Office
awex.es

Brazil

- 📍 Brazil-Catalonia Chamber of Commerce
cambra-brasilcatalunya.com
- 📍 SECOM Trade Promotion Sector of the Consulate of Brazil
barcelona.itamaraty.gov.br

Canada

- 📍 Trade Office of the Canadian Consulate
espana.gc.ca
- 📍 Government Office of Quebec in Barcelona
mri.gouv.qc.ca

China

- 📍 Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Barcelona
barcelona.china-consulate.org/esp
- 📍 Hong Kong Special Administrative Region HKTDC - Hong Kong Trade & Development Corporation
espanol.hktdc.com/barcelona.htm

Colombia

- 📍 Colombian-Catalan Chamber of Commerce
colombocatalana.com

Denmark

- 📍 Trade Council of Denmark
spanien.um.dk



Finland

- 📍 Finnish-Spanish Chamber of Commerce
camarafinlandesa.com

France

- 📍 French Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Barcelona
camarafrancesa.es
- 📍 Business France
export.businessfrance.fr

Germany

- 📍 German Chamber of Commerce for Spain
ahk.es

Hungary

- 📍 Trade Office of the Consulate of Hungary
madrid.mfa.gov.hu

Israel

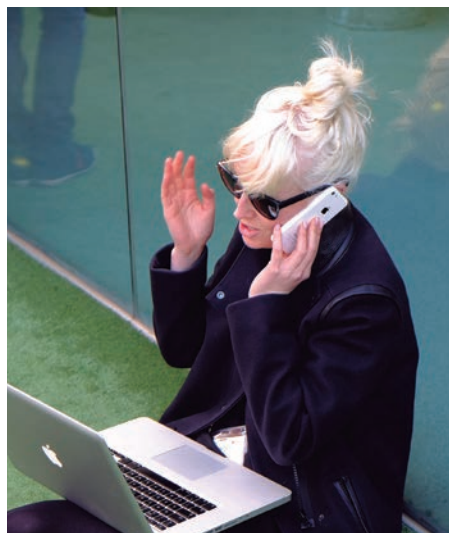
- 📍 Catalonia-Israel Chamber of Commerce
camaracatalanoisraeli.com

Italy

- 📍 Italian Chamber of Commerce in Barcelona
cameraitalianabarcelona.com
- 📍 Trade Office of the Italian Consulate
consbarcellona.esteri.it

Norway

- 📍 Spanish-Norwegian Chamber of Commerce
cchispanor.com



Netherlands

- 📍 Netherlands Business Support Office
holanda.es

Peru

- 📍 Peruvian Chamber of Commerce in Spain
ccipc.org

Portugal

- 📍 Spanish-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry
chp.es
- 📍 Portugal Global - Investment and Foreign Trade Agency of Portugal
portugalglobal.pt

Romania

- 📍 Consulate General of Romania - Office for Economic Trade Promotion
barcelona.mae.ro

Russia

- 📍 Spanish-Russian Chamber of Commerce
hispanorusa.com

Sweden

- 📍 Spanish-Swedish Chamber of Commerce of Barcelona
cchsbcn.com

Turkey

- 📍 Turkish Commercial Attaché's Office in Barcelona
economy.gov.tr

United Kingdom

- 📍 British Chamber of Commerce in Spain
britishchamberspain.com
- 📍 British Consulate General - Trade and Investments Department
Department for International Trade in Barcelona
gov.uk/government/organisations/departament-for-international-trade

United States

- 📍 U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Spain
amchamspain.com

Uruguay

- 📍 Trade Area of the Consulate of Uruguay
consuladouy-bcn.es



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, PLATFORMS AND CLUBS IN THE PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS FIELD

Many companies with foreign capital are based in the Barcelona area and the city counts professionals, executives and businesspeople from other countries among its residents, having established themselves in the region in order to conduct their economic activities.

As a result of this cosmopolitanism, many business, economic and trade associations and entities now exist. Some of these include:

- 📍 **ASAEDE - Asociación Argentina Española de Emprendedores (Argentine Spanish Association of Entrepreneurs)**

With head offices in Barcelona, this association is made up of Argentine entrepreneurs, professionals and executives.
asaede.org

- 📍 **ASODAME – BPW BCN**

Group of business women (freelancers, business women and executives) with products and services from all sectors.
asodame.com

- 📍 **Austrian Business Circle - ABC Barcelona**

Group of professionals, executives and investors from Austria.
facebook.com/ABCSpain

- 📍 **Barcelona Global**

A private, independent, non-profit association whose mission is to make Barcelona one of the best cities in the world for talent and economic activity.
barcelonaglobal.com

- 📍 **Barcelona – Spain Networking Events**

A platform with many events for expats in Barcelona
eventbrite.es/d/spain--barcelona/networking



Barcelona Women's Network

A non-profit, non-religious and non-political social and charitable organisation offering support and friendship to both local and international women residing in the greater Barcelona area.

bcnwomensnetwork.com



Barcinno

It is a collaborative platform sharing the news, knowledge & events of Barcelona's startup, tech and innovation communities.

barcinno.com



Club Suizo de Barcelona (Swiss Club)

A meeting point and mutual support group for Swiss people and individuals residing in Barcelona and the surrounding areas.

clubsuizobarcelona.com



Danish Business Circle Barcelona

Promoters who work to create new business opportunities to serve the interests of Spanish-Danish companies.

circulodanes.com



Guri Business Network

It is designed to facilitate professional networking through the exchange of information, knowledge, contacts, jobs and opportunities.

guribusiness.com



KDF - The Circle of German speaking Executives

The Kreis Deutschsprachiger Führungskräfte (KDF) is an association that brings together more than 200 professionals with executive responsibility in business, diplomatic areas, public administration and cultural environments.

kdf.es



Professional Women's Network (PWN) Barcelona

PWN Barcelona is part of an international network of 3,500 professional women. The aim is to promote professional progress among women and their visibility in the workplace.

pwnbarcelona.net



Red Global MX (Mexicanos Calificados)

It is an interconnected network for the highly qualified migrant community living abroad, implementing projects to benefit Mexico.

redglobalmxbcn.com



Start Up Grind Barcelona

Global community for entrepreneurs that hosts monthly start-up events to teach, inspire and connect entrepreneurs.

startupgrind.com/barcelona



The Circle for Dutch Business in Barcelona

The meeting place for Dutch entrepreneurs, professionals, managers, CEOs and directors based in Barcelona and the surrounding areas.

dekring.org/es



Venezuelan Business Club – Barcelona

Group of Venezuelan professionals, executives and entrepreneurs with a chapter in Barcelona.

venbc.org/spain





Ajuntament
de Barcelona